# A HUNDRED WONDERFUL YEARS

1820–1920

*BY THE SAME AUTHOR*

THE HAT SHOP: A Novel

MRS. BARNET—*ROBES*: A Novel

A MRS. JONES: A Novel

TONY SANT: A Novel

WAR RATION COOKERY (EAT LESS MEAT BOOK)

THE LABOUR-SAVING HOUSE

THE BODLEY HEAD

LITTLE WOMEN OF 1889

THE CHILD OF TO-DAY MUST INDEED BE THANKFUL THAT IT IS NOT DRESSED AS WERE THE CHILDREN OF 1889

# A HUNDRED WONDERFUL YEARS: SOCIAL AND DOMESTIC LIFE OF A CENTURY, 1820–1920. BY MRS. C. S. PEEL, O.B.E. WITH SEVENTY ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PHOTOGRAPHS, PRINTS AND NEWSPAPERS OF THE PERIOD

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THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED

TO

MY HUSBAND

WHO HAS HELPED ME SO MUCH

WITH ITS PREPARATION

"The future will show whether civilization, as we know it, can be mended or must be ended. The time seems ripe for a new birth of religious and spiritual life, which may remould society, as no less potent force would have the strength to do."—*Outspoken Essays*, by Dean Inge, Chapter VI, "The Dilemma of Civilization."

"We believe that many changes in the conditions of life and labour are needed, and are coming to pass; but we believe also that men, without any change except in themselves and in their feelings towards one another, might make this world a better and happier place."—The creed drawn up by Mrs. Humphry Ward, which put in simple form the aspiration of the Passmore Edwards Settlement.

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# INTRODUCTION

Prior to the War I visited from time to time an old lady who, born in 1820, had in 1914 reached the venerable age of ninety-four. Alert, interested in all the topics of the day, her memory unimpaired, she was an extraordinarily interesting companion.

On one occasion our conversation touched on the constitutional powers of English sovereigns and the influence which they could exert on home and foreign policy. It was then that Mrs. —— reminded me of a fact which I had failed to realize, the fact that she had lived in the reigns of no less than six sovereigns, having been born during the life of George III.

My thoughts flew back. George V; Edward VII, the Peacemaker; Victoria, the central figure of the Victorian age; William IV, the Sailor King, of whom the Duchess of Kent's secretary said that he resembled a turkey-cock whose nerves had been upset by green tea; George IV, "handsome, expensive, golden-voiced," and some say worthless; George III, that poor, blind, deaf, mad old man who died in 1820 when he had been sixty years a king. I looked with added interest at the old lady sitting by the window, her white hair draped with lappets of old lace, a fringed and embroidered crape shawl drawn round her shoulders, diamonds flashing on her shrunken fingers, seeing in her a living history of

what is perhaps the most wonderful century there has ever been.

"What a tale you might tell of all that you have seen and known . . . what a book you might write. . . ."

"I shall never write a book . . . old dogs cannot learn new tricks. . . ."

At home again I sat on my London balcony in the June dusk thinking of all that had happened since 1820, making mental pictures of people and places, recalling dates . . . incidents . . . and gradually coming to a realization of the extraordinary changes which had come to pass in the course of a lifetime. The next day a taxi-cab conveyed me and a dozen volumes back from the London Library. Soon, however, my studies were interrupted, for less than two months later there dawned that fateful 4th of August of 1914, and I, like other women, became absorbed in work other than that to which I had been accustomed. It was not until after the Armistice that I saw my old friend again, noticeably more fragile, and depending now upon a reader for her knowledge of contemporary affairs. We fell to talking of that other Great War which ended only five years before her birth—a war, the results of which in many ways had been identical with the results of the war which had just ended. Then, as now, the prices of food and of almost all requisites had risen sharply, hoards of unemployed men roamed the country, officers in the army and navy were "axed," the "newly-rich" were making themselves felt.

"I remember . . . did you know . . . have you read" . . . again the story of this wonderful century obsessed me . . . again and again there came into my

house parcels of books—histories, memoirs, novels. Old people became of vast interest to me. What did they remember?

A year went by—another year, during which I continued my study of the past century. Then some such paragraph as this appeared in various newspapers: "Yesterday Mrs. —— of —— celebrated her hundredth birthday. She was honoured by a message of congratulation from the King, who complimented her on attaining so great an age. Mrs. ——, who is still in fairly good health, held a reception of relatives and friends"—of whom I was one.

That evening I pictured my centenarian friend sitting by the fire which old age needs even in the warmth of June, somewhat exhausted by the pleasant events of the day, while through her mind drifted memories of youth, maturity and age—memories of a hundred years.

And then was born in me the desire to make a book dealing with the social and domestic life of the years which divide the Napoleonic War from the World War, the reason being that although books dealing with the public life of Kings and Queens and great people, wars and politics, are numerous, information regarding the everyday lives of the people is not so easy to obtain. In view, however, of rapidly changing conditions it seemed well worth while to attempt the task of compiling such a record. Hence this book.

DOROTHY C. PEEL.

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*London, S.W. 3.*

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# A HUNDRED WONDERFUL YEARS

1820–1920

# CHAPTER I

## THE CHANGE FROM SLOW TO QUICK TRANSPORT AND MEANS OF COMMUNICATION AND SOME OF ITS RESULTS

When food supplies walked—From coach to train—From ship to sea palace—Omnibuses—The grief of separation—Letters and post cards—Speed machines—The typewriter and the clerk—The sewing machine and ready-to-wear clothes—The conquest over darkness—How electric light was introduced into the Navy—The suburb—Living and eating in public—Hotels and great shops—Restaurants and food shops—The business girl.

Before beginning to tell of the everyday lives of the people who lived during the hundred wonderful years with which this book deals, it is interesting to note that the two most important changes which have come to pass during them are the change from slow to quick transport and means of communication and from an illiterate to a literate populace. To these main changes may be ascribed the greater number of the subsidiary changes which have caused a revolution in our social and domestic life. In 1820, five years after the battle of Waterloo, no one could travel or convey news faster than a horse could travel and England was a sea-protected country. To-day we may lunch in London and be in Paris in time for afternoon tea, while communications may be conveyed, not only by train, but also by cable, telegram, telephone and wireless. Never again may we rely on the protection of the sea, for the flying

man and his machine are its masters, and never again may we send our fighting men to make war upon our neighbours leaving the civilian populace at home in safety. The interests of the civilized world are now woven together and, in consequence, whether we will or no we must become internationalists.

In 1820 and until a considerable number of years after, persons of quality travelled in their own carriages, drawn by horses ridden by postilions, and accompanied by their servants, who waited upon them in the private apartments of the inns at which they stayed. Those who did not keep carriages and who could not afford to post, travelled by stage or mail coach. Poor people when they went from home—which was seldom—travelled afoot, begging a lift now and again, and when animals travelled they also walked.

" The great cities had to be fed and London demanded the fat of the land," so George Macaulay Trevelyan tells us.[1] " Supplies came in by canal boat, and night and day hundreds of horses in relays were coming up at trot and gallop from the South Coast and even from the Berwick and Solway salmon fisheries, bringing fresh to Billingsgate the best fish of every port. A hundred thousand head of cattle and three-quarters of a million sheep yearly walked up to Smithfield for the slaughter, many of them from Scotland or from the borders of Wales. But strangest of all to the modern eye would be the droves of geese and turkeys, two or three thousand at a time, waddling slowly and loquaciously along all the roads to London for a hundred miles round,

[1] *British History of the Nineteenth Century.*

TRAVELLING IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS. THOSE WHO DID NOT KEEP CARRIAGES AND WHO COULD NOT AFFORD TO POST TRAVELLED BY STAGE OR MAIL COACH

*(From "The Coaching Age" by Stanley Harris)*

between August and October, feeding on the stubble of the fields through which they passed."

Sterne mentions turkeys driven with "a stick and a red clout," and so turkeys and geese were driven until it became possible to send their dead bodies to market by train. To harden and protect their feet before setting off on the journey from which they never returned, geese were made to waddle first through tar and then through sand.

Under such circumstances it was inevitable that all but the rich should go but little from home, and for that reason concern themselves chiefly with local affairs, and that housewives should depend upon local supplies and find it necessary to give far more attention to the preserving of home-grown foods than is now the case.

The real beginning of fast transport in England was in 1823, when railways began to be built. It is true that as early as 1818 application was made to construct a railway, but it was defeated by the then Duke of Cleveland, who complained that it would interfere with his fox covers. Nevertheless, in spite of vigorous opposition, railways had to come, though in 1830, when the Liverpool and Manchester Railway was opened and a train ran at the hitherto unheard-of speed of thirty-six miles an hour, many people were greatly disgruntled. They said that railway travel "was flying in the face of the Almighty," little thinking that they might live to see the day when men would indeed fly, and, if not in the face of the Almighty, very much faster than thirty-six miles an hour.

Almost as soon as railways began to carry passengers

there were distinctions of class. Those who paid the highest fares ($2\frac{1}{2}d.$ or $3d.$ a mile) were provided with covered vehicles, on the roofs of which their luggage was carried. The annoyance of a lady when, owing to careless fastening, the trunk in which was her best silk dress flew off and was lost to her for evermore is recorded in her diary, and oh, how equally her grand-daughter was annoyed when her trunk was lost from the carrier of her car when returning from a week-end visit to Brighton. Those who travelled at the cheaper rates had to content themselves with open carriages. Gradually accommodation improved, and by the middle of the nineteenth century second-class passengers had begun to enjoy "good glass windows and cushions on the seats," though the carriages were so badly lighted that travellers took candles with them; these were sold at Smith's bookstalls.

People of any position did not travel second class. They travelled first and their servants second until the second class was done away with, leaving but first and third class carriages. Every one when travelling far took their food with them, until in 1879 the Great Northern ran a restaurant car between London and Leeds, while the first English sleeping cars made their appearance in 1873. That was luxury indeed.

But if land travel was slow, sea travel was no quicker. In 1838, a voyage to America lasted for several weeks and was a considerable undertaking. Now we cross the herring-pond in four and a half days. Fanny Kemble,[1] the actress, writing from Philadelphia, asks, "Do you hear that the steamships have accomplished

[1] *Records of Later Life.*

MODE OF 1837

WHEN QUEEN VICTORIA WAS A YOUNG GIRL LADIES WORE DRESSES SUCH AS THESE, SMOOTHLY-PARTED HAIR LOOPED ROUND THE EARS, AND STIFFLY BONED, TIGHTLY LACED STAYS. THE DRAPED DRESSING TABLE WAS A FEATURE OF THE BEDROOM OF THAT DAY

*(From Townsend's Monthly Selection; Costume—1837-1839)*

their crossing from England to America in perfect safety, the one in seventeen, the other in fifteen days! Just half the usual time, thirty days being the average of the finest passages this way. . . . It seemed at once to bring me again within reach of England and all those I love there."

And as people had been shocked at trains, so there were those who were shocked at steam-ships, that old Scotch lady,[1] for example, who protested against them as counteracting the decrees of Providence by going against wind and tide, vehemently asserting, "I would hae nothing to say to those impious vessels."

Not that the difficulties of travelling deterred women from travel, the Hon. Emily Eden, for instance, who wrote such amusing letters from India, in one of which she describes that famous and courageous, blue-eyed and black-haired adventuress, then "little Mrs. James," the wife of a subaltern, afterwards Lola Montez, friend and adviser of King Louis of Bavaria, whom old people may remember driving about London in a velvet dress with gigot sleeves and a black spoon bonnet.

Even when Mrs. Humphry Ward, whose novels we read with so much interest in the nineties, was a child of five the voyage from Tasmania [2] took three months, and she with her little brothers and sisters slept guarded by nurse or mother for fear that rats should bite their faces.

To-day we cross the sea in palaces in which are swimming baths and hairdressers' shops, restaurants and orchestras. We who now may communicate with far-off persons by means of cable or wireless, we who think

[1] *The Old Scottish Ladies*, by Dean Ramsay. [2] In 1856.

nothing of sending a letter of a few lines by post, or employing a post card, cannot realize the grief of separation in those times of slow and dangerous travelling and infrequent costly letters.

It is a common complaint nowadays that girls and women are so restless that they neglect home duties because they are continually running about from place to place, but in the early 1800's they were obliged to remain far more within their homes, for unless they could afford to keep horses it was difficult for them to go far afield. One wonders how people of small means who were obliged to go out and about managed without the aid of omnibuses, which are now such a feature of life both in town and country.

The first omnibus, run on the Paddington Road in July 1829, was drawn by three horses abreast and carried twenty-two passengers, all inside. It was superseded by others carrying twelve passengers inside and drawn by two horses, and the conductor stood upon a little shelf and held on by a leather strap—a fascinating occupation which little boys in tasselled caps, demurely walking out with sisters in pelisses, bonnets and frilled ankle-length pantalettes, no doubt vowed to adopt when they came to man's estate. City men patronized these conveyances, which had their regular patrons whom they picked up at various stages of the journey, and office boys were sent to take places for their masters for the return journey. It was not until an outside seat, nicknamed the knifeboard, was added and fares reduced (at first *6d.* was charged for any distance) that young business men patronized them. Before that day well-to-do merchants drove and their sons rode and the lesser fry

"LOOK, LUCY, AT THE OMNIBUS!" THE FIRST OMNIBUS WAS RUN ON THE PADDINGTON ROAD IN 1829

*(From "Ancestors in Silhouette by Mrs. F. Nevill Jackson)*

walked to their offices—which was possible when London was as small as it then was. An old lady still living tells how, as a young woman, she stayed in Kent with the first Sir John Lubbock (the father of "Bank Holiday Lubbock") and his family, and on more than one occasion drove with him to the City in his carriage with four horses and postilions. Now the rich man travels by train or car and the horse-drawn "bus" has given way to the great brightly painted and numbered motor omnibus in which the rich and the poor travel together, which thunders along the streets and roads and links the villages and towns throughout the land.

It is interesting to note, too, the various kinds of vehicles in which the centenarian may have travelled during his span of life. The sedan chair, hackney carriage, four-wheel cab (the ancestor of the four-wheeler), the hansom cab (the Patent Safety Cab invented by Mr. Hansom in 1834), landau and brougham, all have had their day. Young men of family have displayed themselves in the park and elsewhere in curricles, Tilburys, Stanhopes or Clarences. Youths of the lower middle class did none of these things, nor would they have penetrated into Hyde Park at the fashionable hours: classes, like individuals, "knew their place" and kept it in those days.

Ladies, too, were particular as to the vehicles in which they drove. In the eighties it was considered impossibly "fast" for a young lady to be seen in a hansom, and even in the nineties well-brought-up girls in Society did not drive in a hansom alone, while for many years after omnibuses were introduced, and after crinolines had gone out and the stairway had come in

and ladies might have mounted it safely, the outside seats were regarded as sacred to the male passenger.

In the days of slow and costly transport persons separated by more than a few miles could meet but seldom, and owing to the same causes they could communicate with each other but little.

Until 1840 only Peers and Members of Parliament were granted the privilege of franking their own and other people's letters, and the rate of postage actually imposed (beyond the limits of the London district office) varied from 4*d.* to 1*s.* 8*d.* for a single letter, which meant one piece of paper not exceeding 1 oz. in weight: a second piece of paper or any other enclosure, however small, made the packet a double letter. The average charge on inland general post letters was nearly 9*d.* for each, so no wonder people crossed and recrossed their letters until they were almost indecipherable. It was Sir Rowland Hill [1] who introduced penny postage, after which franking was abolished and postage stamps came into use.

Post cards made their appearance in 1870, and later private post cards with an adhesive stamp were allowed to be sent by post, but even so the post card for many years remained somewhat of a social outcast, used chiefly for business purposes and amongst intimates. Nowadays people telephone their informal invitations and confirm them by card if they so please.

The telephone has helped us to whirl along faster and to make life less formal. The story of its inventor, Antonio Meucci, like that of many inventors, is sad. Born in Florence in 1808 of poor parents, he and his

[1] Post Office Reform, 1836–1842.

THE RURAL POST OFFICE. COLLECTING THE MAILS

*(From "The Coaching Age" by Stanley Harris)*

wife emigrated to the United States. Here he set up a candle factory and a piano factory, and when Garibaldi fled to America after '49 he went to live with the Meuccis. Garibaldi and his host experimented with a new invention for transmitting sounds to a distance which Meucci had discovered. Garibaldi on the first floor and Meucci in the cellar would talk together through this original, primitive telephone. But in spite of the fact that he patented his invention, the honour of having invented the telephone was afterwards awarded to a Scotch engineer, Graham Bell, and Meucci died a bitterly disappointed man.

In its earlier stages the telephone was used chiefly for business purposes. It has now become a domestic servant of the people, the richer installing it in their houses, the poorer making use of it at public call offices.

As quick transport and means of communication and, in consequence, trade increased, the need was felt for a general speeding up in commercial life, and at the same time the extension of education and the coming of technical schools encouraged the study of mechanics. Hence the introduction of typewriters, duplicating and calculating machines and, that marvel of mechanism, the linotype, all of which became commercial propositions during this marvellous hundred years.

It was not until the mid seventies and early eighties that typewriting machines came into general use. Until then all correspondence was written. As early as 1714 a British patent was granted to a certain Henry Mill, who claimed that he had at great pains and expense perfected "an artificial machine or method for the impressing or transcribing letters, singly or progressively

one after another as in writing, whereby all writing whatever may be engrossed in paper or parchment so neat and exact as not to be distinguished from printing."

By the nineties the profession of shorthand-typist gradually began to absorb vast numbers of young women and a lesser number of men. In 1860 clerks,[1] according to Sir Walter Besant, were pallid or blotchy of face and none of them wore a greatcoat. A woollen neck wrapper was cheap and must serve. Then there were no Saturday afternoon, or Bank Holidays either, and many of these men and boys worked from eight in the morning until eight at night. To-day vast numbers of clerks are nicely dressed, highly efficient young women who work from nine to five, or 9.30 to 5.30 with an interval of an hour for luncheon, and possibly a Saturday morning off in every four, as well as the general Saturday afternoon holiday.

The male clerk less often receives the monthly Saturday morning holiday, which appears to be granted to women by amiable male employers because otherwise they would have no opportunity to do their shopping.

Another speed machine which, like others here mentioned, was in course of preparation before the century with which we deal, but which only came into general use between the years 1820 and 1920, was the sewing machine. By its help a great trade in ready-made clothing was developed. Until the sixties clothes were hand-made, and " ready-made " for long after was a term of reproach. To-day the smartest women buy clothes " off the peg," and in every town are shops full of ready-to-wear garments for men, women and children.

[1] *London in the Nineteenth Century.*

The popularity of ready-to-wear dresses may have been increased by what old-fashioned people term the "floppy" fashions of the last few years. A loose, straight dress, without a collar band, fits the average figure. But, whether the ready-made trade created floppy fashions or merely took advantage of them, who can say? And, whether it will be strong enough to prevent a return to tight-fitting clothes, again who can say?

As for the sewing machine, something of the kind was known as early as 1790. The inventor who first devised a real working machine was a poor tailor, Barthélemy Thimmonier, but though the machine was rather clumsy, being made principally of wood, as many as eighty were being worked in Paris in 1841, making army clothing, when an ignorant and furious crowd wrecked the establishment and nearly murdered the unfortunate inventor. But after making many improvements in his machine, one of which was shown in the Great Exhibition in 1851 and attracted no attention, the poor soul died in 1857 friendless and unrewarded.

It is to America that we owe the modern sewing machines. At first a chain stitch was used, when unless the "fastening off" by hand was carefully attended to, the whole of a seam might suddenly unravel itself! Later a certain Elias Howe introduced the lock stitch, and now no household is complete without its sewing machine. To it we owe the doubtful joy of constantly changing fashions, for when dresses were hand-made they were regarded with considerably more respect than now, when they are "run up" by machine.

As quick transport and quick means of communication

made great development in trade possible, which in its turn caused a demand for more and more "speed" machinery, the faster pace of life in general developed a demand for more powerful forms of artificial light than candles and oil lamps. During this wonderful century the conquest of darkness has taken place. We have learned how to turn night into day, while in industry gas and electrical apparatus make possible processes which before were impossible.

The centenarian can remember streets dimly lighted by oil, then more brightly by gas, and then still more brightly by electricity. He can recall the time when rooms were lit by candles, and later the circular mahogany table upon which stood the oil lamp round which early and mid-Victorian families gathered, the row of bedroom candlesticks put ready on the hall table, the tallow dip of the poor, the flat tin candlestick, and chained to it the extinguisher, and lying in its base the snuffers which were then as much a part of the domestic outfit as are knives and forks to-day. The mould for candle-making is now a curiosity, but when the century was young, candles, and not only candles but soap, were made at home, and until the coming of electric light the large country houses were lighted by oil and candles, as was Earlham, once the Norfolk home of Elizabeth Gurney, who married Mr. Fry and became famous as a Prison Reformer.[1] Mr. Percy Lubbock, staying at Earlham in his childhood, says that "the passages were dimly lighted with a very small oil lamp in a corner, here and there, and the maids had their flat candlesticks, with snuffers and flaring tapers of tallow."

[1] *Earlham*, by Percy Lubbock.

MODES OF 1837-1839

SHOWING DESIGNS FOR AFTERNOON AND EVENING DRESSES SUCH AS WERE WORN WHEN QUEEN VICTORIA CAME TO THE THRONE

*(From Townsend's Monthly Selections; Costumes—1837-1839)*

Owing to the difficulty of driving in the dark, invitations in the country were, when possible, issued for times at which the moon shone bright; now, what with street lamps in the towns and the powerful lights of motor-cars, we may get about almost as easily by night as by day.

Little did those who first experimented in the use of gas realize how thankful the modern housewife, suffering from an acute servant shortage, would be to them. The first practical application of gas distilled from coal as an illuminant is generally ascribed to William Murdoch, who used it between 1792 and 1802. Then in 1807 a German, named Winsor, lighted Pall Mall with gas, and in 1812 a charter was granted to a company named the Chartered Gas Light and Coke Company—of which the present London Gas Light and Coke Company is the direct descendant. Soyer, the great *chef*, introduced gas into the kitchen of the Reform Club, which was one of the sights of the thirties. In those days, however, the well-to-do householder did not feel the need of labour-saving domestic apparatus. Coal ranges were good enough for him, for both coals and domestic labour were cheap and plentiful.

To-day, as we know, it is a very different story and we hail with enthusiasm the cooker which is heated by gas or electricity. A century hence coal as a house fuel will probably be unknown, in urban kitchens at all events, and the atmosphere of towns therefore vastly more pleasant than it is to-day.

That clean and convenient illuminant, electric light, we owe chiefly to Edison in the United States, and Swan in England, who in 1879 succeeded in completely solving the practical problems of producing

electric light. From and after that date electric light became commercially possible, and was brought to public notice chiefly by an electric exhibition held at the Crystal Palace in 1882.

Lord Fisher [1] describes how electric light came to be introduced into battleships. Lord Kelvin, he relates, had taken him to dine with the President of the Royal Society, where for the first time the dining-table was lighted with incandescent lamps, provided by Mr. Swan of Newcastle. After this dinner Lord Fisher wrote to Mr. Swan to procure similar lamps for the *Inflexible*, and an exhibition was arranged to convert "the old fossil of an Admiral Superintendent."

"At last the lamps were induced to glow satisfactorily and at that moment the Admiral, one of the stern old school, and prejudiced against all new-fangled notions, was announced. He immediately asked if Mr. Edmunds had seen the *Inflexible*. I replied that I had. 'Have you seen the powder magazine?' 'Yes! I have been in it.' 'What would happen to one of these little glass bubbles in the event of a broadside?' I did not think it would affect them. 'How do you know? You've never been in a ship during a broadside!' A sailor was dispatched for some gun-cotton. He quickly returned with a small tea-tray about two feet long, upon which was a layer of gun-cotton, powdered over with black gunpowder. The Admiral asked if I was prepared to break one of the lamps over the tray. I replied that I could do so quite safely, for the glowing lamp would be cooled down by the time it fell amongst the

[1] *Records of the Fleet.*

gun-cotton. I took a cold chisel, smashed a lamp, and let it fall. The company saw the light extinguished, and a few pieces of glass fall on the tray. There was no flash, and the gunpowder and gun-cotton remained as before. There was a short pause, while the Admiral gazed on the tray. Then he turned, and said to Lord Fisher, 'We'll have this light on the *Inflexible*.'

"And that was how the incandescent light came to be introduced into the British Navy."

To-day electric light is found in almost all houses belonging to well-to-do people and in urban shops and public buildings. Electric current is also used to a smaller extent for heating and cooking.

Yet another change forced upon us by increasing population and increasing trade, and made possible by quicker transport, was the growth of towns and of suburbs. In 1820 London was a very different city from the London of to-day. Snipe could be shot in the marsh which now is Eaton Square, and it was pleasant to walk in the cherry gardens of Earl's Court. St. John's Wood *was* a wood and Hampstead a village, while the tenants of certain houses in Kensington were forbidden to allow their cows to wander in the High Street!

Those made newly poor by the result of the Napoleonic wars left expensive town houses for cheaper houses near London, and the suburban movement increased as house rent rose owing to the continual expansion of trade. After his exodus from the City, caused to some extent by the increasing rents which made City premises too costly to use as dwelling-houses, and partly because the merchant ceased to be a class apart, the rich

merchant made Bloomsbury his home, and not until fast railway travelling became possible did the day of the more distant suburb dawn.

London in the earlier years of the nineteenth century was a town of little shops with low-fronted, small-paned, wooden-framed windows, for that was still the age of wood, of few uncomfortable hotels such as Fenton's, at which Walpurga, Lady Paget,[1] stayed as an unmarried girl before and after the wedding of the Princess Royal in 1858, with whom she was to return to Germany as one of the ladies in waiting. ("The bride seventeen, the lady in waiting eighteen: truly a respectable Court," said Queen Victoria.)

Fenton's was fashionable, but the rooms were small and dark, and furnished like a common lodging-house. It was impossible to light a fire in her room because the chimney smoked, and poor Walpurga had to write letters on her knee or on the window-sill or the top of a box, as there was no table. "The dirt, the darkness of these rooms was most repulsive," says she.

In response to the demands of travellers, who became more and more numerous as travelling became quicker and more luxurious, came the erection of many-bath-roomed public palaces with restaurants in which uniformed bands add to the already deafening din of voices and service, of huge "stores" with great plate-glass windows, through whose numerous departments the customer may wander for hours, rest in the rest-room, write his letters in the writing-room, eat luncheon and tea in the restaurant. The fashion for living and eating in public has come into being, and quick transport

[1] *Embassies of Other Days.*

allied to cold storage have had their effect upon the nation's diet. In the early 1800's restaurants, as we know them, did not exist. There were coffee-houses, eating-houses, taverns, *à la mode* beef shops where only stewed or boiled beef was offered and cook shops to which you might bring your own chop and put it on the grill for a halfpenny, and the Flying Pie-man with his white apron and his tray of mutton pies was a familiar figure. Then London was not made gayer, as it is to-day, by fruit shops with their piles of scarlet and golden fruits. Fruit was, in towns, chiefly the luxury of the rich until quick transport and cold storage lowered its price and so introduced it, as well as foreign meat, butter and preserved fruit, into the dietary of the middle classes and the poor.

At the Great Exhibition of 1851 there were no restaurants. One reads how on May 1st, the day on which the Exhibition was opened, a lady[1] and her husband set out to see the sights:

"We were up at 6 a.m., and took a memorable walk through the streets. We saw about as motley a gathering as it would be possible to conceive, packed in dense masses. Farmers, wearing broad-brimmed beaver hats, long tailcoats which were donned only on special occasions, bright-coloured waistcoats, and tight breeches,[2] were accompanied by their families. Their wives and daughters, with cheeks like roses, were decked out in stiffly starched print frocks, adorned with flowers and

[1] *Memories of Ninety Years*, by Mrs. E. M. Ward.

[2] The get-up which has come to be associated with the burly figure of the typical Englishman, John Bull.

ribbons, and large bonnets. Foreigners of every country mingled with the crowd. Beautifully dressed gentlepeople, the crinoline [1] in evidence, well-to-do tradesmen, clergymen, country doctors, and pickpockets formed such a jumble of humanity as I never saw before. Families had spent the night on doorways, the police treating such vagrants with indifference, and they were having an early meal as we squeezed through the crowd. Cold sausages and bacon were being dealt out by heads of families, children were regaled with milk from enormous bottles, and I saw an old Irishwoman smoking a pipe contentedly. We passed through Hay Hill into Berkeley Square, and the scenes changed. Numbers of people of good social standing had driven up to town overnight, and had slept in their carriages, the horses having been taken out. They were determined to see the Great Exhibition, and were ready to greet the Queen and Royal Family at the precise moment of their arrival. Powdered footmen were preparing breakfast on the pavement, kettles were singing, and the smell of bacon and eggs frying greeted us, whilst fine ladies, in lovely attire, declared they were fainting for a cup of tea. Footmen, distracted by these appeals and the novel manner of serving breakfast, were tumbling over each other. This was about 6.30 a.m."

Now London and other large towns teem with restaurants, tea shops, fruit shops and sweet shops. These cities must be prepared to feed the huge day population which returns to its dormitory suburbs at

[1] Very full skirts were fashionable, but the crinoline was not worn by Englishwomen until some years later (see p. 53).

night. The coming of girls into business and their consequent possession of personal incomes accounts to some extent for the kind of food offered and the premises in which it is served, and possibly the fact that young women drink but little alcohol, allied to the fact that they have more pocket-money, explains the growing demand for sweets. Business girls needed cheap decent accommodation, which the A.B.C. and similar places afforded.

The A.B.C.—Aerated Bread Company—was formed in 1862 for making unfermented bread. In 1880 the Company started what are now known as Tea Shops, where coffee and chocolate and later substantial refreshments were sold. Coffee, by the by, was almost unknown in London except at high-priced hotels prior to 1874. At this date there were few places where ladies could go for luncheon. Tea shops and suburban life had their influence on middle-class customs, causing the evening meal to become later and heavier: men began to eat a light tea-shop luncheon and return home to a late dinner.

Lyons' tea shops followed the A.B.C., and eventually the firm developed a vast catering organization, owning, in addition to tea shops, huge restaurants and hotels, and selling bread, cakes and other cooked provisions.

To-day the business quarters of a town belong as much to women as to men, but even in the nineties the coming of girls into offices perturbed many people deeply. As usual, what was new was wrong. Terrible results were prophesied—a vast increase in the illegitimate population, for example, for no matter what new ideas are born and adopted, it seems that evil must be prophesied of them before they cease to attract attention and become commonplaces of everyday life.

# CHAPTER II

## THE CHANGE FROM AN UNEDUCATED TO AN EDUCATED POPULACE AND SOME OF ITS RESULTS

Education—"It was but little they presumed to teach"— Schools in lofts, cellars, kitchens, shops—A child explains his duty towards God —Huxley's ladder from gutter to University—The schoolboy and the midshipman—Housing—Water for which people fought—Open cesspools—Housing to-day—Prisoners and captives—Public hangings—Night life—Hard drinking—Cruelty to animals—Cruelty to children —The coming into power of Labour—The Victorian aristocrat—Growth of medical and surgical knowledge—Anæsthetics—Nurses and nursing homes—Funeral customs—Religious thought—The theory of Evolution—A thoughtful revolution.

That quick transport and means of communication brought about great changes in the everyday life of the people is evident, but even greater, perhaps, were the results of the change from an illiterate to a literate populace, for with education came increased power and also the growth of humane thought. In the early part of the nineteenth century [1] "an objection to educating working people was part of the general philosophy of the governing world. The working classes were regarded as people to be kept out of mischief rather than people with faculties and characters to be encouraged and developed. They were to have just so much instruction as would make them more useful work-people, to be trained, in Hannah More's phrase, 'in habits of industry and piety.'"

[1] *The Town and Country Labourer*, by J. L. and Barbara Hammond.

# UNEDUCATED TO EDUCATED

Hannah More's [1] fame rests chiefly on the charitable work she did among the poor. She spent many years founding schools for children of farmers and labourers, and taught them everything which she considered it discreet for them to know without asking any fee or reward for the work. Her work has perhaps not been sufficiently recognized, and this may be due to a certain attitude of condescension which she never dropped. Labourers' children, she thought, should be taught only such coarse works as may fit them for servants. "I allow of no writing for the poor," said she, but in that she did allow reading for the poor she was in advance of the times.

The idea of educating the poor frightened the rich, because their comfort depended upon the poverty and consequent subservience of the poor. During the first half of the nineteenth century it was only the "high-brows" of the time who demanded that the masses should be educated for other reasons than to make them good work-people, pious and easy to handle. Their idea of education might with little exaggeration be summed up as "training the poor to poverty." [2]

In order to obtain contributions for charitable schools it was necessary "to avow and plead how little it was that they pretended or presumed to teach;" [3] nevertheless a marked increase in public interest in education made itself evident throughout the century. When there was no inspection of schools and when such low

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[1] Born 1745, died 1833. *The Letters of Hannah More*, edited by R. Brimley Johnson.

[2] *History of Elementary Education*, by Birchenough.

[3] *A Century of Education*, 1808–1908, by Henry Bryan Binns.

ideals regarding education were widespread, it was not surprising that at some of the "educational" centres the scholars did not learn very much. In 1861 a Commission under the Presidency of the Duke of Newcastle reported that it had received

"distressing evidence as to the character of most of the private schools, which were usually the only ones to be found in the districts whose need was attracting special attention. These were often taught by discharged servants or barmaids, outdoor paupers, small traders, washerwomen, cripples, drunkards, consumptive and very aged persons—those, in short, who had no more profitable resource than such a school afforded. Many of the schools were held in lofts, bedrooms, cellars, kitchens, shops, workshops, or other available but unsuitable places; where the children, generally little more than infants, tumbled over one another 'like puppies in a kennel.'[1] Attendance, always irregular, ceased altogether at an early age, and the pupils, who had learnt next to nothing, forgot even this within the next twelve months."

This last consideration applied also to most of the public schools. The result of the inquiry went to show that while perhaps three-quarters of the children of school age attended some school, at some time or other, only one-third were in inspected schools; that the

[1] The importance of the provision of better infant schools had been raised in committee by Allen, November 1829, and was discussed at a special meeting without definite result. In 1836 a special society, which took the name of the Home and Colonial Society, was founded for the promotion of such schools and the training of their teachers.

EARLY VICTORIAN FASHIONS

(JULY AND AUGUST, 1837)

COSTUME D'AMAZONE EN NANKIN BRODÉ ET ROBE EN POULT DE SOIE GARNIE DE DENTELLE NOIRE

HERE WE SEE THE FULL SKIRTS EXTENDED BY STIFF FULL PETTICOATS WHICH PRECEEDED THE CRINOLINE

*(From Townsend's Monthly Selections: Costumes—1837-1839)*

education of the remainder was an almost negligible quantity, and that, owing to the short period and irregular character of attendance, even in the inspected schools a mere fraction of the total number of scholars ever entered the upper classes, in which alone any satisfactory teaching was given. The intelligence of the remainder was never awakened, that is to say, their real education was not so much as begun. Even the much-discussed and loudly boasted religious teaching of the schools proved, on investigation, to be no better than the rest. Here, for example, is an answer to the question, "What is thy duty towards God?" given by an average child in an inspected school, which has often been quoted as evidence of the parrot-work which passed for religious instruction in 1855:

"'My duty toads God is to bleed in Him, to fering and to loaf withold your arts, withold my mine, withold my sold, and with my sernth, to wirchp and give thanks, to put my old trash in Him, to call upon Him, to onner His old name and His world, and to save Him truly all the days of my life's end."

But the mental attitude towards education altered surely if slowly.[1] The Reform Bill riots of 1830–1831 drew attention to the ignorance of the peasantry in the Southern Counties, for it was found that few of those arrested could read or write. In Oldham and Ashton up to 1841, with a population of 105,000, there was not a single public day school for poor children, and forty per cent. of the men and sixty-five per cent. of the women married or witnessing marriages in Lancashire and Cheshire could not sign their names.

[1] *The Progress of the Nation*, 1851. Porter.

Even in the war years those conducting a soldiers' and sailors' wives' club in South London found that some of the older women wrote with such difficulty that they preferred to employ one of their children to write their letters, and not a few had forgotten how to read; while a welfare worker in a munition factory in the north of England discovered that some of the younger women even had forgotten how to read and could only sign their names slowly and most illegibly.

All through the century with which we deal, thinking people had been pressing for more education and better education for the masses, while by the middle of the century even the unthinking began to have a vague idea that rough, rude, ignorant and degraded people were possibly a greater menace to the State than an educated working class.

Ruskin [1] held it "indisputable that the first duty of a State is to see that every child born therein shall be well-housed, clothed, fed, and educated till it attain years of discretion." He also preached that education was a means of showing men how to live, while Huxley, speaking as a member of the London School Board, said, "I conceive it our duty to make a ladder from the gutter to the University along which any child may climb."

It was not, however, until 1870 that a State system of elementary education was introduced. Before that time children might or might not be educated even to the extent of learning to read and write at charity schools, State-aided schools, dame schools and other forms of

[1] Note on Modern Education, *The Stones of Venice*, Vol. III, Appendix 7.

private schools. In 1893 a child might be wholly or partially excused attendance at school at eleven years of age.

To-day the leaving age is fourteen, and free places and scholarships do indeed provide that "ladder from the gutter to the University along which any child may climb."

With regard to the education of boys of the upper classes, one finds an interesting note in Fanny Kemble's Records.[1] She was staying at Worsley when public schools were discussed.

"In speaking of the education of young English boys at our great public schools, the whole system pursued in those institutions was condemned as bad; but on all sides, nevertheless, admitted to be better (at any rate, for the sons of noblemen) than the incessant, base, excessive complaisance and flattery of their servants and dependents, from which, they all said, that it was impossible to screen them in their own homes, and equally impossible that they should not suffer serious moral evil. Lord Francis said that for a lad like his nephew, the Marquis of Stafford, there was but one thing worse than being educated at Eton, and that was, being educated at home; therefore, concluded they all in chorus, we send our boys to our public schools. So the children are sent away lest they should be corrupted by the obsequious servants, and luxurious habits and general mode of life of their parents. And this, of course, is one of the inevitable results of distinctions of classes and hereditary wealth and influence; it is not one of the good ones, but there are better."

[1] *Records of Later Life*, Vol. II.

At many schools during the 1800's boys suffered considerable hardship. "We washed out in the cloisters, or rather, as you may imagine, when the weather was cold we did not wash. We rose early and two hours later breakfasted off a penny roll and a cup of sky-blue milk," an old gentleman, who if alive to-day would be 101, has recorded. "Had we been obliged to depend upon the food provided by the school we should have gone hungry. And indeed if home supplies or pocket-money failed, we *did* go hungry." To-day the food, even in some expensive schools, is apt to be monotonous and not too well cooked, but at all events it is plentiful, and cleanliness and fresh air in dormitories and class-rooms are insisted upon.

But if school life was rough during the nineties, what can be said of life in the Navy? Before and for some time after 1820 midshipmen were mere children.[1] It is a small midshipman but eleven years old, who, when writing to his mother, describes his food thus:

"We live on beef which has been ten or eleven years in a cask, and on biscuit which makes your throat cold in eating it owing to the maggots, which are very cold when you eat them! like calves-foot jelly or blomonge—being very fat indeed. . . . We drink water the colour of the bark of a pear tree with plenty of little maggots and weevils in it, and wine, which is exactly like bullock's blood and sawdust mixed together. . . . I hope I shall not learn to swear," he adds, "and by God's assistance I hope I shall not!"

[1] *Records*, by Admiral of the Fleet, Lord Fisher.

It is true that this little lad was writing before the century with which this book deals, but by 1820 conditions had not altered greatly in the Navy.

When Lord Fisher himself joined the Navy in 1854, in the first ship he was in, fresh water was carried in casks, and ship's biscuit supplied in what were known as "bread-bags."

"These bread-bags were not preservative; they were creative. A favourite amusement was to put a bit of this biscuit on the table and see how soon all of it would walk away. In fact one midshipman could gamble away his 'tot' of rum with another midshipman by pitting one bit of biscuit against another. Anyhow, whenever you took a bit of biscuit to eat it you always tapped it edgeways on the table to let the 'grown-ups' get away. The water was nearly as bad as the biscuit. It was turgid—it was smelly—it was animally."

He also says that an uncle of his had a snuff-box made out of salt beef, and that it was French polished! And further, as an instance of the brutality of the age, he mentions that the day he joined as a little boy he saw eight men flogged and fainted at the sight.

During the 1800's girls of the upper class were generally educated at home, though some were sent to some such finishing school as that in which Becky Sharp [1] was a pupil-teacher. To-day, housing difficulties and the servant problem, together with the growth of democratic views, have helped to overcrowd girls' schools.

[1] *Vanity Fair*, by W. M. Thackeray.

As regards the education of the working classes, even had it been procurable in the first half of the century, it would have benefited the children little. The child who is underfed, exhausted by the terrible conditions of his home life, is unable to benefit greatly by any form of school teaching, a fact which is now realized.

Far into the nineteenth century the housing of the less well-to-do of the urban working classes was terrible. There were in London, as in other large towns, the quarters of the respectable poor, of the criminal, the prostitute, as indeed there are to-day; but bad as conditions are at this moment, they were worse then.

"The more picturesque the name the worse the reality: Peartree Court and Rose Alley, for example, had at the back of them the Fleet River, until about 1860 the open common sewer for a population of nearly half a million. Field Lane (Saffron Hill) was the home of the petty thief, the receiver of stolen goods.[1] In its shops hang bunches of silk handkerchiefs purchased from pickpockets. In the slums of Drury Lane until about 1850 there was no sewer, and the houses were so crowded together that there were no back-yards and the cesspools were constructed under the houses.

"Everywhere the water supply in such places was limited. 'The water comes on on Saturday night at six o'clock, and there is no more until six o'clock on Monday.' The people fought for it while it was running—about half an hour or an hour a day—and they went begging for it when it was turned off. In a back-

[1] Dickens gives a wonderful description of this part of London in *Oliver Twist.*

yard a cesspool was overflowing and spreading over the ground." [1]

Seventy years have passed since Mr. Goodwin's pamphlet was written, but housing conditions are not yet even approaching to what they should be. The house famine from which we now suffer causes much misery. To-day two girls complain that they have to sleep on the kitchen table for lack of space to sleep elsewhere; a family inhabits one room, the dead baby is shut up in a chest of drawers until it can be buried; one water tap in the basement serves a large house let out in rooms. One family lives in each room, and the walls and ceiling are swarming with bugs. Children pine in dark, damp basements. A family of husband, wife, girl of fifteen and boy of seventeen live in one room. The mother will not go to hospital for a much-needed operation because she dare not leave the girl alone under such conditions. These, alas, are still common occurrences, but whereas in the earlier part of the century such a state of affairs was regarded by all but the few as natural and inevitable, to-day the great growth in humane feeling which is the result of education makes it the few who tolerate such misery, the many who desire its alleviation. All through the century we find this budding and blooming of a kinder spirit.

In Georgian and in Early Victorian days it was no unusual thing for children to be sentenced to death for theft, and the transportation of children was a common occurrence. To-day no person under eighteen may be

[1] A Pamphlet written by George Goodwin, F.R.S., Editor of *The Builder*.

hanged, no child under sixteen committed to prison. There are special children's courts, and one of the justices trying the case must be a woman. So far as possible child offenders are put under probation, and only in more serious cases sent to an industrial school, fined or birched.

Only one year before the period with which this book deals, Mrs. Fry [1] visited a woman in Newgate.

"I found poor Woodman lying-in, in the common ward, where she had been suddenly taken ill; herself and little girl were each doing very well. She was awaiting her execution, at the end of the month. What can be said of such sights as these? I read to Woodman, who is not in the state of mind we could wish for, indeed, so unnatural is her situation, that one can hardly tell how or in what manner to meet her case. She seems afraid to love her baby, and the very health which is being restored to her produces irritation of mind."

And what a tragedy of love and faithfulness and of inhuman cruelty is this: a woman whose husband had been transported for felony committed the same felony in the hope of joining him in exile. The judge thought it necessary to make an example and hanged her instead.

In those days we hanged young hard-working men in the prime of life and strength, out of work through no fault of their own, who, driven half mad by the wailing of hungry children, stole a hare or a pheasant. Men were hanged for forgery, for stealing; the bodies of

[1] *Memoir of the Life of Elizabeth Fry, with Extracts from her Letters and Journal*, by Two of her Daughters (1847).

THE MORNING OF THE EXECUTION. IN THE CONDEMNED YARD AT NEWGATE. THE CLERGYM ANOFFERS CONSOLATION WHILST THE FETTERS ARE KNOCKED OFF AND THE HANGMAN WAITS WITH THE ROPE

*(From "Life in London" by Pierce Egan)*

traitors were disembowelled. By the year 1837 it had come to be thought that a life for a life was all that the law should exact, yet it was not until 1868 that public executions ceased.

A very old lady recalls how her late husband (who was born on Waterloo Day [1]) described to her a public hanging [2] which he, then a boy of sixteen, was induced to witness. A night of hysterical revelry, and then that horrid dawn when, feeling sick with disgust but ashamed to admit it, he saw a poor terrified wretch hanged by the neck until he was dead, amongst the shouts, curses and screams of a drunken hysterical crowd. To make up an all-night hanging party was one of the things which fast young men did, and schoolmasters even took their pupils to witness these horrible scenes as "an example." The male young have ever an appetite for horrors and the fast life of this time gave them every opportunity to indulge it.

"If we consider what is called 'Life in London' [3]—that is to say, the profligacy of aristocratic London—we find that the pace was faster, the prodigal more headlong, his career more unblushing. The young men of the period drank deep and long; they turned night into day; they drove about openly with companions who were notorious; they vied with each other in mad freaks and follies; they gambled with frenzy; they lost great estates in a week, even in a single night, in rooms where they were lured by supper and wine and the power of borrowing as much as they pleased. The follies of the

[1] Battle of Waterloo, 1815. [2] Public hangings ceased in 1868.
[3] *London in the Nineteenth Century*, by Sir Walter Besant.

young man of fashion seem incredible; it is much to be deplored that some of the ladies [1] who shared their brief days of splendour have not written a history of their friends. The end of such careers, unless it was a Peerage, or a great estate crippled for many years, was the Debtors' Prison or Boulogne. . . . Everything in London was much later than now; the supper-houses were open all night long; there were dancing places open all night; there were gambling places open all night; certain streets were crowded all night; there were profligates and prodigals in other classes besides that of the young man of position and fortune; there were silver hells, copper hells even; the fast young City clerk, the young medical student, the country visitor went the round; first he had dinner at a West End tavern, such as the Blue Posts in Cork Street, with a bottle of fine old port; then to the pit of the theatre at half-price; then to supper—lobster and stout and a go of brandy-and-water; then to the 'Piccadilly,' or 'Jessops' or the 'Argyll,' where he had the honour of dancing with some lovely Jezebel; with more drink, more supper, more dancing, more gambling, till broad daylight sent him home, tired but happy. Had he not seen life? Could he not go down to the country and talk of the glories of that great night? The repetition of such a night generally brought our friends to the Debtors' Prison. This retreat, affectionately called the 'College' by its residents, was now in full swing. Im-

[1] As a matter of fact, a notorious *demi-mondaine*, Harriette Wilson, did write her memoirs, but if her morals left something to be desired, her discretion was great and her book of no great interest. Lola Montez also left a record of her life.

prisonment for debt was in certain circles the chief terror of life."

Later on the public night life of London became earlier, less gaudy, and less brutal. In recent years public night life has again become a feature not only in the life of the fast young man, but of men and women of all classes, who frequent more or less respectable night clubs at which dancing is the chief attraction and the company decidedly mixed, while certain restaurants are open all night.

It was not only the fast young men who drank heavily. Drunkenness was the fashion in all classes. Lord John Russell [1] has left a record of the intemperance then existing in Society.

"When the ladies left the dining-room," he says, "fresh bottles of port would be brought in, the host would arise and lock the door, and almost every man drank until he was under the table. With the exception of one or two men who kept sober, they never joined the ladies again, and a page, towards the end of the drinking, as the men slipped from their seats, would loosen the neck-cloths of the prostrate guests, and it was a regular custom for the valets to come in, carry out their masters, put them in their coaches, and escort them home. Some curious incidents arose when some of the valets were not themselves too sober and substitutes had to take their places, and some of the masters were put into the wrong coaches and carried to the wrong houses about midnight or later, much to the

[1] Born 1792, died 1878.

astonishment, as one may well imagine, of the wives and other members of the households."

Only the other day a lady, when speaking of these "good old days," mentioned that her aunts had told her how in their girlhood they would escape by the drawing-room windows after dinner and make their way to their bedrooms by the side door and back stairs rather than risk an encounter with drunken gentlemen in the hall; while in memoirs and diaries of the period the necessity of making provision for stowing away drunken labourers at fêtes, coming of age entertainments and other festivities is mentioned. That a man should be drunk was then no more remarkable than it is to-day that he should be sober.

Many of the sports of that day were incredibly brutal, the state of public opinion being such that when, shortly before the century with which we deal, Lord Erskine, then Lord High Chancellor, introduced into the House of Lords a Bill for preventing "wanton and malicious cruelty to animals," the honourable members met his efforts with catcalls and derision, and when referring to his Bill a writer in the *Edinburgh Review* held that "no reason can be assigned for the interference of legislation in the protection of animals unless their protection be connected either directly or indirectly with some advantage to man."

Bull-baiting,[1] and the baiting of other animals, cock-fighting, throwing at the cock (a "sport" consisting of throwing missiles at a bird fastened to a stake until it

[1] *The Century of the R.S.P.C.A.*, by Captain Fairholme, O.B.E., Chief Secretary.

BULL BAITING

FROM THE PICTURE BY HENRV ALKEN, ENGRAVED BY I. CLARK, 1820 CRUELTY TO AN ANIMAL WAS NOT AN ILLEGAL ACT UNTIL 1822. THEN AN ACT WAS PASSED WHICH PROTECTED SOME ANIMALS, NOT INCLUDING BULLS, SO THAT BULL BAITING CONTINUED

*(From Alken's "The National Sports of Great Britain")*

was killed), were popular amusements in the earlier years of the century, and any effort to protect animals was regarded as the absurd fussing of cranks. Cruelty to an animal was not an illegal act until 1822, when Richard Martin's (afterwards known as Humanity Martin) Act was passed which protected some animals, not including bulls, so that bull-baiting continued.

A London clergyman, the Rev. Arthur Broom, after more than one effort started a society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in 1824. The general public would have nothing to do with it, and it was not until 1835, when Princess Victoria accorded her patronage to it, that people began to think there might be some good in this new-fangled notion about kindness to animals.

One of the first tasks undertaken by the Society was the reformation of the slaughter-houses. In the early part of the nineteenth century the slaughter-houses of London were filthy underground cellars, and into these sheep awaiting slaughter were flung; as the animals had a drop of about twelve feet, broken legs were not infrequent. Their sufferings were not ended then, for it was the custom to skin animals before they had been properly killed. The Society stopped that cruelty to a certain extent, but it was powerless to prevent people who traded in cats' skins from skinning cats alive, because at that time there was no law for the protection of cats. However, the Society eventually put an end to that barbarity, but undoubtedly the general public was extraordinarily callous.

The idea that animals have a right to our protection is slowly gaining ground, but Dean Inge is in advance of public opinion when he says that " The discoveries

of Charles Darwin have proved beyond a shadow of doubt that the so-called lower animals are literally our distant cousins. They have as good a right on this planet as we have; they were not made for our benefit, as we used to suppose."

But perhaps it was not strange that so little was thought of cruelty to animals at a time when so much cruelty to children was permitted in mine and mill, to the little chimney-sweeps, and to boys and girls who found their way into prison, about which more will be said elsewhere.

It is interesting to note here, however, that the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children did not come into being for sixty years after the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and it was owing to the existence of the first society that the second was organized.

In 1881 Mr. Thomas Agnew of Lullingsfields, Heswall, Cheshire, went to America, and in New York saw for the first time the title, "Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children," and learned its origin.

"A lady visiting the poor of New York learned of a child whose groans and cries horrified the neighbourhood, but the mother kept the child in her own house under lock and key. The lady applied in vain to the police and the courts; she was told by one and all that there was no redress. So she addressed a complaint to Mr. Burgh, the Secretary of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and reported that an animal was being barbarously treated. Mr. Burgh at once sent an Inspector, who was completely taken aback when he

BEAR BAITING

FROM THE PICTURE BY HENRY ALKEN, ENGRAVED BY I. CLARK, 1820. THE BAITING OF ANIMALS WAS A FAVOURITE "SPORT" DURING THE EARLIER YEARS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

*(From Alken's "The National Sports of Great Britain")*

found that the animal was a child. Mr. Burgh entered into the humour of the thing, brought the child and its mother into court, when to his astonishment, and the astonishment of all New York, the mother was convicted and punished.

"The lady, having succeeded in her effort, tried a second case, but Mr. Burgh said, 'No, this Society was formed for the protection of animals, not children; its inspectors are not trained for work among children. Still, you have made out a good case, and if a Society can be formed for the protection of children, I shall be glad to help. Such a society was formed. Mr. Elbridge T. Gerry was its first President and Mr. Fellows Jenkins its first Superintendent." [1]

The following year Mr. Agnew came back to Liverpool, where the first British Centre was started, to be followed by others in Birmingham and Bristol. Then a Mansion House Meeting was organized in London, and ultimately, with the help of Baroness Burdett-Coutts, Miss Hesba Stretton, Mr. Benjamin Waugh and others, the London Society and finally the National Society was formed.

It might have been thought that the formation of a Society to protect children from cruelty would have been approved by everyone, but as a matter of fact the proposal to form the Society was not accepted with unanimity. One of the public organs published a statement "that the Rev. Benjamin Waugh and a few benevolent old women, of both sexes, were desirous of forming a Society

[1] *Occasional Papers.* XV. *Work in Early Days for the N.S.P.C.C.* by T. F. A. A.

for the purpose of washing the faces of dirty children." [1] At the moment it was not so much a case of active opposition as of cynical indifference. The opposition came later, and there was plenty of it, it being the common view that a child was a chattel, the property of its parents, to be exploited for gain if the parent so desired. Gradually the idea grew that the child was a personality, an embryo citizen and deserving of all the assistance that the State could offer him. To-day the child is cared for from the time of his birth, indeed before his birth, through every stage until he ceases to be a child or a "young person" and becomes an adult. Yet in spite of the network of humanity cast about our child population, the meshes are sufficiently large for certain children to fall through, and there is still pressing need for the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children and various other Societies which deal with the difficult problems of securing for the child that which he should have without weakening the self-respect of the parent or unnecessarily destroying family life.

Still other results of the spread of education have been the coming into power of Labour, the increased social importance of the rich middle class and the lessening of the importance of the aristocracy. In contemporary literature constant allusion is made to the arrogance and the rudeness of the Georgian and Early Victorian aristocrats, who, although they undoubtedly were not always as polite as they should have been (even to each other), yet had qualities which were of great value to the nation, a fact which, in these democratic days, is

[1] *Occasional Papers.* XIII. *The Protection of Childhood and Youth*, by Robert J. Parr, O.B.E., Director of the N.S.P.C.C.

sometimes in danger of being forgotten. Where shall we find to-day a great lady who, her daughter having been forgiven for marrying a rich young cavalry officer against her parents' wishes, visits the young couple and returns saying that she had "no idea that the middle classes lived so comfortably"? Where another great lady who, on being informed that her son had seduced "a Miss Brown," replies, "And why not"? Can we imagine that anyone on the occasion of a visit of a great man such as John Bright [1] would write, even in joke, to advise the host to count his spoons? The host was the Duke of Bedford, and it was Lord John Russell who proposed to take John Bright to Woburn. Would even the most old-fashioned butler regard it as anything but an honour to entertain such another as the late Mr. Joseph Chamberlain? "The butler showed his disapproval in his manner, though he did not venture at the moment to put it into words. But a few days afterwards we had another dinner at which were present some of our regular friends. The following morning Freeman said to me solemnly, 'We had a very nice dinner last night.' 'Yes,' said I, 'I think it went off very well.' '*All very nice people*,' he added with marked emphasis, and left me to digest the unspoken rebuke." [2]

Apropos of the importance of the aristocracy, a delightful description is given in *The Letter-bag of Lady Elizabeth Spencer-Stanhope* [3] of the arrival at church of the local grandees.

[1] *Memoirs of Lady Georgiana Peel.*
[2] *Fifty-one Years of Victorian Life*, by the Countess of Jersey.
[3] By A. M. W. Stirling.

"We had got pretty well on in the service when the Vicar—old Dr. Bracken—made a solemn pause; this continued, and on turning round I saw Lord and Lady Downe, followed by a footman carrying an array of Prayer-books and other comforts, walking with slow and stately pace up the aisle. As they approached the pulpit, the Vicar made a profound bow, which was most politely returned by Lord Downe, who then entered the family pew and reverently placed his face, as was then the custom, within his hat; then having comfortably seated themselves and calmly found the places in their books, the service, which had been completely suspended, was allowed to proceed. This seemed to excite no surprise in the congregation, and I was told afterwards that it was a thing of ordinary occurrence.

"The departure of Lord and Lady Downe from church was marked by the same respectful demeanour on the part of the congregation, no one thinking of leaving his place till the great people had made a dignified exit."

This must have happened in 1823.

That there are social sets and persons who aim at being "exclusive" is true to-day as, human nature being what it is, it will always be true, but birth is no longer the only key to society. Money, brains and charm also unlock the door.

Social and domestic life were also influenced by the increase of medical, and especially surgical knowledge, the introduction of anæsthetics in 1847 and the growth of knowledge regarding sanitation. At the time of the Crimean War sick nursing was in the hands of dirty, drunken, ignorant Mrs. Gamp. Then appeared Miss

FROM MRS. GAMP TO THE TRAINED NURSE

A GROUP OF NURSES IN 1865 AND A GROUP OF NURSES IN 1875 (GUY'S HOSPITAL GAZETTE). AT THE TIME OF THE CRIMEAN WAR NURSING WAS IN THE HANDS OF "MRS. GAMP." TO MISS FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE WE OWE THE TRAINED EFFICIENT NURSE

Florence Nightingale,[1] who, even as a young girl, was determined to live a life different from those of her contemporaries—"the Lady of the Lamp" who came to be held up to all womanhood as an example of womanly sweetness, helping the sick, soothing the dying. Help the sick and soothe the dying she did, but the fame of Florence Nightingale goes down to posterity not because of her kindness and sweetness, but because she was one of the greatest organizers of her own or any other day. She had influence, she had money, determination, a sharp tongue. It needed more than gentleness and sweetness to perform her task, opposed as she was by a stubborn force of senseless opposition. Eventually Miss Nightingale organized both the military, naval and civilian nursing service, banished drunken Mrs. Gamp and set in her place the trained and efficient sick nurse. Middle-aged people of to-day remember when trained nurses for private work and nursing homes did not exist. To-day sick people go to nursing homes partly because of the servant problem and partly because surgeons prefer to perform operations in places where there are operating theatres.

Accounts of those early days of the Crimean War, when agonized men were shipped in batches across the Black Sea to find in the hospitals of Scutari a hell of want, confusion, neglect, misery, are sad reading, and in spite of all that Florence Nightingale did, history repeated itself, for in September 1914 men were brought to the Casino Hospital at Boulogne, where stretchers lay close upon the floor, upon the veranda, upon the garden paths and lawns, and the moans and cries of those to whom

[1] Born 1820, died 1910. See *Eminent Victorians*, by Lytton Strachey.

no attention could be given were heard throughout the night. Working parties were held to make " comforts " for those who fought at Balaclava and at Inkermann, as later they were held to make " comforts " for the men who fought in France and Flanders, in Gallipoli or Salonica. But in the Great War women did more than nurse and sew. Breeched and booted and bobbed they worked as military chauffeurs, land girls, munition workers, omnibus conductors, postmen, railway carriage cleaners, " doing their bit," in the slang of the day.

Until nearly the end of the nineteenth century the etiquette of mourning was severe. Funeral coaches were drawn by sable-plumed horses, their unfortunate heads stiffly confined by tight bearing reins, blinds were drawn for days, and ladies in voluminous crape-trimmed dresses retired from society for months and wrote their letters on paper with deep black borders. To-day it becomes more and more usual to cremate the dead and to lessen funeral ceremonial. The etiquette of mourning is far less rigorous. It is left to the individual to decide what mourning he shall wear, when he shall again take his place in society. There is less talk of death—more of " passing on." In religious matters there is more freedom, less of the religion of respectability—more perhaps of the religion of the spirit, less talk of Fear, more talk of Love. The writings of Darwin [1] and of Huxley and their school, which caused so great a commotion in the sixties, shook people's faith in religion as

[1] *The Origin of Species*, by Charles Darwin, appeared in 1859 and shocked the orthodox religionists terribly. His theory of evolution was supposed to be destructive of the doctrine of revealed religion. People were taught that the world was created in seven days, and the idea that man should have been evolved by natural processes and not created ready-made, so to speak, caused quite an ecclesiastical panic.

it had been preached, and helped to make it possible for a Dean of St. Paul's [1] now to proclaim publicly (and yet remain a pillar of the Church) that " this immobility of dogma causes other evils besides intellectual dishonesty "—that " institutional Christianity has not kept pace with the growth of human knowledge . . . that the worst enemies of Christianity are Christians . . . that when traditional orthodoxy provokes the moral indignation of the enlightened conscience, and when it outrages our sense of truth and honesty by demanding our assent to scientific errors which were exploded centuries ago, then indeed the Church is in danger, and its well-disciplined battalions will not save it from disaster."

In the eighteenth and in the earlier years of the nineteenth century the upper classes of this country were terrified (were they guilty of conscience ?) by the idea that much such another revolution as had occurred in France [2] might occur here, and, as is ever the case, fear bred harshness and injustice. But time went on and the kind of revolution which was expected did not come. There was rioting now and then and some lives were sacrificed, but for the most part changes came about quietly through the power of thought and of its servants, the written and the spoken word. And so it is that some may not realize that during these wonderful years a revolution has occurred, the greater in its results because of its thoughtfulness than any that could have been brought about by blood-stained and hysterical violence.

[1] *Outspoken Essays :* Confessio Fidei, by Dean Inge.

[2] French Revolution. Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette leave Versailles, June 20th, 1791. Louis beheaded, 21st January, 1793 ; Marie Antoinette beheaded, 16th October, 1793.

# CHAPTER III

## LIFE IN PALACES

King William offended—Queen Victoria puts an end to the custom of sitting late over the dinner-table—How the Queen proposed—Prince Albert puts his wife's house in order—Cold rooms and dirty windows—The Lord Steward lays the fire, the Lord Chamberlain lights it—How young ladies "fined themselves down"—"That you shall not wear," said the Prince—How the Queen dealt with her grandson—No smoking at Court—A tartan palace—A drawing-room *de luxe* at Balmoral—The Empress Eugénie and Miss Smyth—A dignified and imposing Queen—Dining with the Household—The sacred hearthrug—Dining and sleeping at Windsor—"The funny trousers"—"Not one of *my* biscuits"—Mrs. Asquith at Windsor—Edward VII—Lord Fisher and his boots at Sandringham—Drawing-rooms, Garden parties and an investiture.

In 1820 it was the fashion at Court, as elsewhere, to eat heavily and to drink deeply. The then Prince of Wales, afterwards George IV, reeled drunk to his wedding, and in 1833 when King William, who was none too sober a monarch himself, went to Ascot all the grooms got drunk every day "except (seemingly) one man; and he was killed going home from the races"—scarcely an encouragement to the others to remain sober! Leopold of Belgium, the Princess Victoria's uncle, gave great offence to King William by drinking water at dinner: "What's that you are drinking, sir?" asked the King one day. "Water, sir." "God dam it, sir," was the rejoinder, "why do you not drink wine? I never allow anyone to drink water at my table."

It is said that Queen Victoria—"Our little Woman" as her mother's secretary used to speak of her—put an end to the fashion of the gentleman sitting over their wine by refusing to sit down until they joined her in the drawing-room, but although gradually long sitting and deep drinking after dinner became unfashionable, it has not to this day become usual for the men and the ladies to leave the table together.

The coming to the throne of a young inexperienced girl, however, could have but little effect on the manners and customs of Society in general, and it was not until after her marriage to the Prince Consort in 1840 that the Victorian Court began to encourage a more seemly style of living than that which had obtained in the days of the Georges.

On October 15th, 1839, Victoria [1] summoned Prince Albert to her room and abruptly offered him marriage. Speaking to her aunt, the Duchess of Gloucester, afterwards, she said it was "a nervous thing" to do, but that it would not have been possible for him to propose to the Queen of England. "He would never have presumed to take such a liberty."

The young pair were married on February 10th, 1840, at the chapel of St. James's Palace. The wedding breakfast was at Buckingham Palace; the honeymoon was spent at Windsor and only lasted four days.

It was not long after the marriage that the manifold and expensive discomforts of the Royal palaces caused Prince Albert to endeavour to set his wife's houses in order—a task which won for him a reputation for meanness and cheeseparing. It was said of him that he

[1] *Queen Victoria*, a Biography, by Sidney Lee, and *The Peel Papers*.

actually saved the candle ends.[1] As a matter of fact he saved not the ends but the candles. The rooms were then lighted by hundreds of candles, and these having been used once became the perquisite of some servant, while even if the room had not been used the candles were changed just the same, a practice which was then ended.

Again, the Prince, examining the accounts, was puzzled by a weekly expenditure of thirty-five shillings on Red Room wine. He inquired into the matter, to find that during the reign of George III a room in Windsor Castle with red hangings had once been used by officers of a guard for whom wine had been provided. The guard had long since been moved elsewhere, but the payment for wine in the Red Room continued, the money being received by a half-pay officer who held the sinecure position of under-butler.

Baron Stockmar (working under the Prince's direction) found the arrangement of the Royal Household strange.[2]

" The chief officers of the Household were in the same position and doing the same tasks as they had filled and done for centuries, and though all the details of their work had changed gradually, no new rules had been made for their guidance. These chief officers were the Lord High Steward, the Lord Chamberlain and the Master of the Horse. These three were also great officers of State, were changed with every Ministry—between 1830 and 1844 one was changed five and another six

[1] *Queen Victoria*, by Lytton Strachey.
[2] *The Early Court of Queen Victoria*, by Clare Jerrold.

AT CROCKFORD'S, WHICH WAS THE FASHIONABLE GAMBLING CLUB IN THE DAYS OF COUNT D'ORSAY

*(From 'D'Horsay; or The Follies of the Day" by a Man of Fashion)*

times—they could not reside at the Palace, and often could not be in the same place as the Court. They were chosen by the Ministers for their political strength and opinions, without any reference to their powers as good housekeepers, good organisers, or good masters. This led to the curious situation that the Masters of the Queen's Household could rarely attend to their duties, which had to be deputed to people who were perhaps incapable, or also not on the spot, and that in many trivial ways Victoria had no authority in her own home. There was no domestic to whom she could give orders, because the servants were under the absentee masters, and neither she nor the Prince could ensure having a well-warmed room to live in. She was, in fact, so great a personage that it was arranged that every order to the servants should pass through other lips than hers, and as those other lips were generally miles away from the Royal domestic scene, the orders, if they were of a serious nature and outside the sphere of ordinary servants, were not given at all. So the Queen sat and shivered in her drawing-room, paid enormously for candles to light a room which would be in darkness when needed, and could not from inside tell the state of the weather because of the dirt on the windows.

"When George III was King the Lord Steward had charge of the whole Palace except the Royal apartments; in the next two reigns he was also held accountable for the ground floor, including the hall and the dining-rooms. But when Victoria came to the throne he gave over the grand hall and other lower rooms to the Lord Chamberlain, which seems to have left the mastership of the kitchen, sculleries and pantries vague.

"It seems that authority over a room conferred responsibility regarding the most trivial matters, such as the laying of the fire, the cleaning of the windows, the brushing of the carpet. This authority had no place outside the room, nor outside the house; thus the Lord Chamberlain or his deputy might order the windows of the Queen's boudoir to be cleaned inside, yet it remained for the Master of the Horse, who had no authority over the woods and forests, to arrange when the outside should be cleaned. This sort of thing was complicated by the fact that the housekeepers, pages, housemaids, etc. were required to give obedience to the Lord Chamberlain, while the footmen, livery porters and under butlers, being clothed and paid by the Master of the Horse, owned allegiance to him; and the rest of the servants, cooks, porters, etc. obeyed the Lord Steward." [1]

One often finds allusions to the discomfort in the Royal palaces: "Victoria, feeling the cold especially one day, sent a messenger to Sir Frederick Watson, then Master of the Household, complaining that the dining-room was always cold. That perplexed gentleman replied gravely to the messenger:

"'You see, properly speaking, it is not our fault, for the Lord Steward lays the fire and the Lord Chamberlain lights it.'"

As to the lighting of the Palace, it was the duty of the Lord Chamberlain to buy the lamps, and see that there were sufficient both of them and of candles; but the Lord Steward was responsible for filling, cleaning, and lighting them.

[1] *The Early Court of Queen Victoria*, by Clare Jerrold.

"Supposing a pane of glass was broken," we hear, "so involved were the conditions for getting it repaired, that it might be weeks before the necessary authority could be obtained. If the kitchen window happened to be smashed, the following process would have to be gone through. The chief cook would write and sign a request for the replacing of the glass, definitely describing where it was needed; this was counter-signed by the Clerk of the Kitchen; then it had to be signed by the Master of the Household; from him it was taken to the Lord Chamberlain's office, where it awaited his invaluable signature; it was then laid before the Clerk of the Works under the Woods and Forests Department. By the time the workman was ordered to put in the window it was not improbable that months had elapsed, and one really wonders whether the Queen's cook did not resort to the time-honoured use of brown paper.

"It is almost impossible to imagine a worse-regulated establishment than that of the little lady who was the First Person in the Kingdom," said Clare Jerrold, "yet who had not power to ensure decent attendance from her servants."

"Queen Victoria, as a girl and during the early months of her marriage, was passionately fond of riding and dancing. She liked the waltz best, but in her girlhood was only allowed to waltz with a dancing mistress. She was a good musician and kept time like a metronome! she played duets, and it is said lost patience awfully if her partner was erratic."[1]

In those days middle-class people followed Court fashions, but the aristocracy despised the ways of the

[1] *Victoria, Queen and Ruler*, by Emily Crawford.

simple Germanised Court people, says Mrs. Crawford; and she also tells us that during the Queen's early married life the middle classes were very genteel; and thought it very *infra dig.* to do useful work, and notes that "in order to look interesting and to fine themselves down, young ladies used to be leeched behind the ears, and the ringlets which they wore hid the leech bites."

Lady Dorothy Nevill[1] (who, as that lively diarist Walpurga, Lady Paget, writes, "must be everywhere," and whose husband, when Prince Albert died, put on a pair of particularly light check trousers to show his disapproval of the Prince), considers that Prince Albert's ideas did not affect English aristocracy to any appreciable degree. Mr. Gladstone once said to a friend of Lady Dorothy's, "It was Prince Albert who brought German into fashion in England." She replied, "Never, it was Carlyle and his translations of Schiller and Goethe. Prince Albert had little or no influence on Society."

On society with a large "S" he may have had little influence, but on the social life of his adopted country he exercised a great influence, for after the first year or so of married life there is no doubt that Queen Victoria became to a great degree, whether consciously or no, the transmitter of her Consort's opinions.

A letter written by Lady Willoughby de Eresby and quoted by Sidney Lee, describes to a correspondent a musical party at Lady Normanby's London house in honour of the Queen and Prince Albert in June 1840. "Lady Williamson, Lady Barrington, and Lady Hardwicke all sang divinely, supported by Lablache and Rubini. The Queen was charm'd and Cousin Albert

[1] *Life and Letters of Lady Dorothy Nevill*, by Ralph Nevill.

looked beautiful, and slept as quietly as usual, sitting by Lady Normanby."

There were no illustrated papers then and the people in general knew very little about the ways of Royalty, but after the Queen's accession the *Illustrated London News* came into existence, and this gave people some news of the Queen. "Then, as now," says Mrs. Crawford, "people were always more interested in women than in men."

But if Prince Albert did not influence Society with a large "S," he undoubtedly worked well in many other ways for his adopted country, and if he was only the power behind the throne, at all events he taught his little Queen-wife not only to love him but to respect him.

It is related by Mrs. Crawford [1] that on one occasion the Queen and her Consort disagreed. Prince Albert locked his door. The Queen demanded entrance. "Who is there?" "The Queen." But it was not until in reply to his query that there came the words, "Your wife," that the angry little lady gained admittance.

The Queen became very domesticated, and when she visited in big houses used to like to see the kitchens, which showed her good sense, for on the kitchen depends the comfort of the household. The Queen's domestic instincts were not, however, approved in this "genteel" age. She was also deeply interested in her dairy at Windsor. This dairy was built according to the best principles, kept cool by running water, yet free from damp. The walls were covered with glazed tiles representing spring flowers. Milk-pans in Worcestershire porcelain

[1] *Victoria, Queen and Ruler*, by Emily Crawford.

with gilt rims, and too gorgeously fine perhaps for rusticity, proclaimed Royal wealth. The marble floor, constructed for surface water to run off, gave an impression of coolness. Skim and butter-milk went to the pigs. The nursery and Royal table at Windsor were supplied from the Frogmore dairy.

People who saw the Queen at that time draw a quaint picture of the tall Prince Consort striding on in front, the Queen with her blue eyes bulging scampering along as hard as ever she could after him as they made their way about their farm at Windsor. It is pleasant to think of the little Royal lady young and happy in the days—all too short—before death took from her the one person to whom she could be a woman rather than a Queen.

The Queen dressed simply without much taste, and this was the fault in part, says Sidney Lee, of Prince Albert, who, like many men, had a contempt for the practice of " following the fashion " and for the extravagant sums of money which ladies spent on their wardrobes.

When the Queen's French *coiffeur* came from Paris and brought fashions with him, the Prince was consulted. On one occasion he came in while the man was displaying the modes. His comment was brief. " That you shall not wear," said he.

He did not, however, object to a wife clad in tartan, so the Queen set the fashion of wearing tartan south of the Tweed. The stout little lady in a screaming Stuart tartan must have been a noticeable sight. The fashions of that time were said to be invented by the Empress Eugénie, and none of them suited the Queen, but, in spite of that, one reads that " the Queen looked a Queen,

SPORT IN THE DAYS OF CRINOLINE. MISS BETHAM, THE ARCHERY CHAMPIONESS OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND IN 1865, AND THE SAFETY SKATING FRAME

*(From "The Queen")*

while the Empress looked like a beautiful dressmakers' dummy." [1]

On the occasion of the Princess Royal's wedding at Windsor in 1858 the young German girl who afterwards became Lady Paget notes that all the English ladies wear coloured woollen petticoats, and in her letters asks if she shall bring some home for relations. In those days none but white petticoats and white stockings were known on the Continent. Continental and English fashions differed considerably more then than now, and the Queen, so Lady Paget says, asked the German ladies not to wear their crinolines, as crinolines were not in fashion then in England, though they had been worn for some time on the Continent.[2] So Walpurga wore her full skirts without their accustomed support.

She finds the Queen much better looking and taller than she expected and extremely kind. Dinner at Windsor was at 8.30; there was music the whole time, and a Highlander came round with a bagpipe and walked twice round the table, "and made a horrid noise," says the little German. Eleven o'clock was bedtime, and at 9.30 everyone breakfasted together—about twenty people.

It is said that Queen Victoria did not hesitate to slap her children if she considered that they needed such correction. She also stamped her foot at them, probably as a warning that the slap might follow. It is related that the Crown Princess of Prussia found her eldest son so unmanageable that she sent him to stay with his grand-

[1] *Victoria, Queen and Ruler*, by Emily Crawford.

[2] It is doubtful if this statement is correct. According to the *Encyclopædia Britannica* the crinoline was introduced from France in 1854, and went out of fashion towards the end of the sixties.

mother and that, on his refusing to say how do you do to some visitor, Queen Victoria marched him out of the room, slapped him soundly and returned him to the company a sadder and a wiser grandchild. Both the Prince Consort and the Queen seem to have treated the Prince of Wales with more severity than their younger sons; probably because they were more anxious about his future. One learns [1] that the Prince was not allowed to smoke in any of the Royal residences, and when once he transgressed was punished by being kept to his room for a month! Visitors were not allowed to smoke; it is even said that the Prince Consort was not permitted to do so. It was only after Prince Henry of Battenberg's marriage to Princess Beatrice that the Queen became more lenient in this respect.

According to Clare Jerrold, the Prince once escaped from Cambridge to have a day out in London. His tutor at once telegraphed to both his parents and he found a Royal carriage waiting for him at the station; on being asked where he wished to be taken, he replied with a twinkle, " Exeter Hall."

It appears that the Queen was never happier than when in Scotland, but the railway journeys must have been a trial, as only the Queen's carriage had any lavatory accommodation, so that stops were made in lonely places, and as the doorsteps of the trains were very high up, it was extremely difficult for ladies with trains, huge bustles, great chignons and thin shoes to hoist themselves out of and into the carriages.

Lytton Strachey shows us a picture of Victorian family life in the castle which was built by Prince Albert

[1] *The Widowhood of Queen Victoria*, by Clare Jerrold.

at Balmoral, upon the interior decoration of which the Queen and her Consort lavished all their care.

"The walls and the floors were of pitch-pine, and covered with specially manufactured tartans. The Balmoral tartan, in red and grey, designed by the Prince, and the Victorian tartan, with a white stripe, designed by the Queen, were to be seen in every room; there were tartan curtains, and tartan chair-covers, and even tartan linoleums. Occasionally the Royal Stuart tartan appeared, for Her Majesty always maintained that she was an ardent Jacobite." [1]

So devoted to tartan was the Royal Lady that when Sir Robert Peel (then Prime Minister) visited her at Balmoral it is said that she created a special tartan for him! Perhaps by then he had become less nervous and more mannerly and no longer "scraped the carpet with his toe" and caused the Duke of Wellington to regret that "he (the Duke) had no small talk and Peel had no manners."

Water-colour sketches by the Queen adorned the walls at Balmoral, together with stags' antlers, and the head of a boar, which had been shot by the Prince Consort in Germany. In the hall stood a life-sized statue of him in Highland dress. "Victoria declared that it was perfection."

She always spoke of Balmoral as "his own creation, own work, own building, own laying out, with the impress of his dear hand stamped everywhere." [2]

[1] *Queen Victoria*, by Lytton Strachey.
[2] *Recollections of a Royal Parish*, by Patricia Lindsay.

The Queen encouraged the keeping up of old Highland customs, such as the torchlight dances which were held in front of the castle; Hallowe'en parties, when bonfires blazed on many of the hills, and lighted torches, called "sownachs," were borne round the bounds of the various farms and homesteads to keep off the evil spirits supposed to be let loose on All Hallows' Eve. The effect was extremely pretty when from some elevated point of view numbers of these torches could be seen flitting about the valley, while the fires were burning on the heights.

At Balmoral [1] there was an even more luxurious dairy than at Windsor:

"Built of granite, octagonal in shape, it stood like a big mushroom in a wide green opening in the birchwoods near Brown's [2] house. To let in the maximum of light, the Prince Consort chose the octagonal form set round with two rows of windows. The topmost were about a foot and a half high, and let down with pulleys. The lower range could be raised and lowered like ordinary windows, but generally remained shut, as air came in through ventilating pipes beneath the marble floor, this arrangement keeping out flies. Hot and cold water could be turned on freely. The milk-pans stood on marble shelves and were plunged, when empty, into a huge boiler in which the water was bubbling hot.

"The Queen often looked into the byre and dairy, and exacted Dutch cleanliness. Her cows were always

[1] *Victoria, Queen and Ruler*, by Emily Crawford.
[2] John Brown, the Queen's trusted servant.

remarkably healthy, and had the glossiest black pelts, it was said, in Scotland."

We gain further knowledge of Royal life in the Highlands from Miss Ethel Smyth,[1] now Dame Ethel Smyth, the famous composer and author. Miss Ethel Smyth was asked by the Empress Eugénie to stay with her at Birkhall, which was one of the Queen's Scotch houses. The Queen said that Miss Smyth was to be presented to her when she came to see the Empress the next day; it was a day of dreadful storms, but Miss Smyth was informed that the Queen would infallibly turn up, probably in an open carriage, and that her ladies would wear the minimum of wraps, as the Queen herself never caught cold and had a great objection to being crowded out by rugs and furs.

"The Queen was expected at three o'clock, but long before that time the Empress was scouting in passages and peering into the storm-tossed garden to make sure that the coast was clear, for the Queen had the greatest horror of coming across stray people. When, on the stroke of three, the Royal carriage arrived at Birkhall, but for the Empress, Madame Arcos, and the footmen it might have been a deserted house.

"The Empress and Madame Arcos received the Queen and Princess Christian at the front door, and the red carpet, unrolled in a flash, was sopping wet before the august visitors had time to set foot on it. The three Royal ladies then disappeared into the drawing-room, while Madame Arcos and Lady Ampthill, who was in

[1] *Streaks of Life.*

waiting on the Queen, came into the room where I in another sense was also in waiting. Presently the Empress herself looked in, beckoned to me, I followed . . . and lo ! I was in the Presence.

" Seated on one of the ordinary cane-chairs was a wee little old lady with exactly the face of the photographs, though paler than one expected, on her head a close white straw hat, tied under her chin with a black ribbon (the only possible plan, given the storm and an open barouche). So awe-inspiring was the first impression that I should have been terrified but for the wonderful, blue, childlike eyes, and the sweetest, most entrancing smile I have ever seen on human face. . . .

" The Queen then expressed a hope that the Empress would bring me to Balmoral, after which I was dismissed and joined the official ladies in the other room. . . . The storm, which had somewhat abated in honour of the Queen's arrival, was now raging more wildly than ever, the rain descending like one continuous waterfall.

" In due time came the promised command, and one evening I found myself struggling to achieve as presentable a toilette as possible, having been bidden, with the Empress, to dine at Balmoral. . . .

" Why no one prepared me for the situation I was about to become part of, why no one gave me a hint how to comport myself in it, I cannot imagine. The Empress was always thinking out and guarding against eventualities in what seemed to me an almost feverish fashion, yet this time she said not a word, and I can only suppose she felt certain that my darkness would be enlightened by Madame Arcos or one of the Maids of Honour. But it was not so, and when we left the dinner-table, being the

only guest of my sex present, I gaily headed the procession drawing-roomwards, my mind innocently set on making myself agreeable when I should get there. . . .

"On a large hearthrug—tartan, I think—in front of the grate, in which I rather fancy a few logs burned (though given Her Majesty's hardy habits it seems improbable), stood the Queen, conversing with the Empress in a lively manner that contrasted with the somewhat halting intercourse at Birkhall. . . . Leading up to the two august ladies was an avenue composed of Royal personages—ranged, as I afterwards found out, in order of precedence, the highest in rank being closest to the hearthrug—which avenue, broadening towards its base, gradually became mere ladies and gentlemen of the Court, and finally petered out in a group of Maids of Honour huddled ingloriously in the bay-window.

"What I ought to have done, I believe, was to stand rigid and silent among these last, try discreetly to catch the eye of the Queen and the Princesses, curtsy profoundly when successful, and await events. Will it be believed that what I did do was to advance unconcernedly up the avenue, with a polite intention to say 'How do you do' to the Queen?

"If a young dog strays up the aisle during church no one says anything, no one does anything, but, none the less, he soon becomes aware that something is wrong. Even so, as the distance between myself and the hearthrug diminished, did I become aware that something was very wrong indeed; my cheerful confidence waned and my step faltered. I saw the Queen slightly turn her head, look at me for a second as if I were some strange insect, and resume her conversation with the Empress. If I

had been a Brobdingnagian spider as big as a Newfoundland she would not have acted differently. Someone would remove the creature; that was enough. I did not catch the Empress's eye, but I now know that since she could not shriek: 'Mon Dieu, n'avancez pas!' she must have wished the earth would open and swallow her up. At this moment dear, human Princess Christian, who had come more in contact with low life than the Queen, stepped forward and shook hands with me—and somehow or other, I know not how, I backed away into the obscurity from which I should never have emerged.

"Afterwards I heard all about that hearthrug, and could gauge the dimensions of my audacity. It was as sacred a carpet as exists outside Mohammedanism, and the distance from it at which people were permitted to station themselves—if invited to come near it at all—was the measure of their rank and importance. Only Crowned Heads trod it as a right, or occasionally, as supreme honour, some very favourite Minister, like Lord Beaconsfield." [1]

But, in spite of the hearthrug incident, when the Queen said "Good-night" to Miss Smyth,[1] she added a hope "that we shall see you at Windsor," and then

"she and her Imperial guest moved towards a special Royal exit; for though the Empress, the Marquis of Bassano (who was in attendance on her), Madame Arcos and I were all driving home in the same carriage, it would never do for us three to go out by the same door as a Crowned Head.

[1] *Streaks of Life*, by Ethel Smyth.

" This was lucky, for I now had the chance of witnessing a wonderful bit of ritual. Arrived on the threshold, the while we mortals stood rigid, the Queen motioned the Empress to pass before her; this the Empress gracefully declined to do. They then curtesied low to each other. The movement of the Queen, crippled though she was, was amazingly easy and dignified; but the Empress, who was then sixty-seven, made such an exquisite sweep down to the floor and up again, all in one gesture, that I can only liken it to a flower bent and released by the wind. They then passed *together* out of the door, practically shoulder to shoulder; but I believe, though far be it from my ignorance to dogmatize, that on such occasions the visiting Sovereign is permitted to permit the home Sovereign to lag about one inch behind."

We may learn something of life at Windsor from Lady Jersey,[1] who relates that on one occasion when dining and sleeping at Windsor the Speaker, Arthur Peel, was not met at the station, and that it was " a comfort to find that in the most exalted establishments mistakes do sometimes occur."

Dinner was at a nominal 8.30, and a page was sent to escort visitors to the dining-room.

" Just as I had finished my toilet," says Lady Jersey, " Jersey came into my room in great agitation. He was expected to wear what he called the ' funny trousers '— not knee breeches, but trousers fastened just below the calf of the leg and showing the socks. Unfortunately his black silk socks were marked in white, and he said I

[1] *Fifty-one Years of Victorian Life.*

must pick out the marking—which was impossible all in a minute, and the rooms somewhat dimly lit. However, my maid suggested inking over the marks, to my immense relief, and all was well."

At that time the lady-in-waiting showed the guests a plan of the table, and it was explained that when the Queen went in to dinner all followed. A lady was not sent in with a man, but each guest seated himself as directed. When the time approached the guests were drawn up on either side of the door by which the Queen entered. She greeted each in turn kindly but quickly, and went straight in.

Another picture [1] is shown us of the Queen—widowed, sad, sitting at her dinner-table with her daughter, Princess Beatrice, at Osborne. At dessert a plate of biscuits was handed. The Queen turned them over slowly with her fingers. "Not one," she said in a mournful tone, "not one of *my* biscuits! Will you see to it, Beatrice?"

Then comes that great day of pomp and circumstance, the Diamond Jubilee of June 20th, 1897. It was on that day when passing out of Buckingham Palace that the Queen touched a button which gave the signal for the transmission by telegraph to all parts of her vast dominions of this message: "From my heart I thank my beloved people. May God bless them." No less wonderful and more touching in its simplicity was the last procession of the Great Queen.[2] They brought

[1] *The Note-books of a Spinster Lady.*

[2] The funeral of Queen Victoria, February 4th, 1901.

her coffin across the Solent on a war-ship between a row of war-ships and then on to London, where, upon a gun-carriage with the Union Jack for pall, it was drawn through multitudes of black-clothed, silent, weeping people, many of whom had known no other sovereign.

Let us make our good-bye to the great figure of the Victorian age in Lytton Strachey's words, for no one has told of Victoria's death more beautifully.[1]

"Perhaps her fading mind called up once more the shadows of the past to float before it, and retraced, for the last time, the vanished visions of that long history—passing back and back, through the cloud of years, to older and ever older memories—to the spring woods at Osborne, so full of primroses for Lord Beaconsfield—to Lord Palmerston's queer clothes and high demeanour, and Albert's face under the green lamp, and Albert's first stag at Balmoral, and Albert in his blue and silver uniform, and the Baron coming through a doorway, and Lord M. dreaming at Windsor with the rooks cawing in the elm trees, and the Archbishop of Canterbury on his knees in the dawn, and the old King's turkey-cock ejaculations, and Uncle Leopold's soft voice at Claremont, and Lehzen with the globes, and her mother's feathers sweeping down towards her, and a great old repeater-watch of her father's in its tortoise-shell case, and a yellow rug, and some friendly flounces of sprigged muslin, and the trees and the grass at Kensington."

Mrs. Asquith [2] (now Countess of Oxford and Asquith)

[1] *Queen Victoria*, by Lytton Strachey.
[2] *Autobiography of Margot Asquith*, Vol. II.

gives us a glimpse of life at Windsor during the reign of King Edward VII when paying her first visit to Windsor Castle in June 1908.

" We motored Violet (now Lady Violet Bonham Carter) to the garden party at Windsor, and after sending her back to London we walked up to the Castle. Before going to rest, having been told that dinner was at fifteen to nine, I examined the Prime Minister's apartments. They consist of two bedrooms, with marble baths attached to each; and a small sitting-room with large windows looking out upon the park. Hanging on a shiny grey and white wall-paper are indifferent portraits of Gladstone, Peel, Lord Cross, Melbourne, and Disraeli. We found flowers on the tables and every kind of newspaper laid out for us to read. . . . At twenty minutes to nine Henry and I walked along the circular corridor, gazing at the pictures as we passed the vermilion servants. We assembled in a large uninteresting room—the ladies standing upon one side and the men upon the other while we awaited the entrance of the King. . . . The King and Queen were in high spirits and more than gracious to us. She looked divine in a raven's wing dress, contrasting with the beautiful blue of the Garter ribbon, and her little head a blaze of diamonds. After dinner we played bridge—Grey and I, Mensdorff and Sir Gerald Lowther—while Henry played with the Queen; and the King made a four with Alice Keppel, Lady Savile and the Turkish Ambassador.

" On the next day after lunching with the household I retired to my room, leaving Henry talking to Morley and Grey.

"Our Dane (the page who sits outside the Prime Minister's apartments) informed me that we were to join their Majesties in the Castle courtyard at four o'clock to motor first to the gardens and then to Virginia Water, where we were to have tea. On my arrival in the courtyard the King came up to me and said:

"'Where is the Prime Minister?"

"Curtseying to the ground, I answered:

"'I am sorry, Sir, but I have not seen him since lunch: I fear he cannot have got your command and may have gone for a walk with Sir Edward Grey.'

"His Majesty (angrily turning to his gentlemen-in-waiting, Harry Stonor and Seymour Fortescue): 'What have you done? Where have you looked for him? Did you not give him my command?'

"The distracted gentlemen flew about, but I could see in a moment that Henry was not likely to turn up, so I begged the King to get into his motor. He answered with indignation:

"Certainly not! I cannot start without the Prime Minister.'

"He looked first at his watch and then at the Castle clock, and fussed crossly about the yard. Seeing affairs at a standstill, I went up to the Queen and said I feared there had been a scandal at Court, and that Henry must have eloped with one of the Maids of Honour. I begged her to save my blushes by commanding the King to proceed, at which she walked up to him with her amazing grace, and, in her charming way, tapping him firmly on the arm, pointed with a sweeping gesture to his motor and invited Gracie Raincliffe and Alice Keppel to accompany him: at which they all drove off."

After King Edward was operated upon for appendicitis he could not bear the fatigue of long dinners, and from that time short dinners became the fashion. A lady staying at Windsor declared that at large parties those who were served last had scarcely time to eat the good things put before them before their plates were snatched away, so quick had to be the service to get the meal done in the prescribed time.

Lord Fisher[1] describes a visit to Sandringham when it was the Norfolk home of King Edward and Queen Alexandra.

"The King was there alone, and Lord Redesdale and myself were his only guests. The King was very fond of Redesdale, and rightly so. He was a most delightful man. He and I were sitting in the garden near dinner-time. The King came up and said it was time to dress, and he went up in the lift, leaving Redesdale in the garden. Redesdale had a letter to write and rushed up to his bedroom to write the letter behind a screen there was between him and the door; the door opened and in came the King, thinking he had left Redesdale in the garden, and went to the wash-hand-stand and felt the hot-water can to see if the water was hot, and went out again. Perhaps his water had been cold, but anyhow he came to see if his guest's was all right. . . .

"On another occasion I went down to Sandringham with a great party, I think it was for one of Blessed Queen Alexandra's birthdays. As I was zero in this grand party, I slunk off to my room to write an important letter; then I took my coat off, got out my keys, unlocked

[1] *Records.*

my portmanteau and began unpacking. I had a boot in each hand; I heard somebody fumbling with the door handle, and thinking it was the footman whom Hawkins had allocated to me, I said, 'Come in, don't go humbugging with that door-handle!' and in walked King Edward, with a cigar about a yard long in his mouth. He said (I with a boot in each hand!), 'What on earth are you doing?' 'Unpacking, Sir.' 'Where's your servant?' 'Haven't got one, Sir.' 'Where is he?' 'Never had one, Sir; couldn't afford it.' 'Put those boots down; sit in that arm-chair.' And he went and sat in the other on the other side of the fire. I thought to myself, 'This is a rum state of affairs! Here's the King of England sitting in my bedroom on one side of the fire and I'm in my shirt-sleeves sitting in an arm-chair on the other side!'

"'Well,' His Majesty said, 'why didn't you come and say "How do you do" when you arrived?' I said, 'I had a letter to write, and with so many great people you were receiving I thought I had better come to my room.' Then he went on with a long conversation, until it was only about a quarter of an hour from dinner-time, and I hadn't unpacked! So I said to the King, 'Sir, you'll be angry if I'm late for dinner, and no doubt your Majesty has two or three gentlemen to dress you, but I have no one.' And he gave me a sweet smile and went off."

Throughout the reign of Queen Victoria, Drawing Rooms took place in the afternoon, and refreshments were not provided for those who, in full evening dress, Court trains and feathers and carrying bouquets, came to pay their respects to their sovereign. The business of hair-

dressing and dressing began quite early, and the start for the Palace was made long before the luncheon hour, which enabled the sightseers who gathered in the Mall to watch jewelled and befeathered ladies refreshing themselves from sandwich box and flask. In those days the members of the great families drove to the Palace in their painted carriages with white-wigged coachmen and powdered footmen in state liveries. Persons of lesser degree took a pride in the smartness of their horses and carriages, and the liveries of coachmen and footmen, who wore posies of flowers in honour of the occasion. All this happening in broad daylight made a fine show and attracted crowds of sightseers, whose comments were occasionally more frank than complimentary. Those were the days when ladies wore flannel petticoats. "At the Drawing Room at which I was presented," writes a lady "a *débutante* of my acquaintance, having fastened hers insecurely, felt it descending as she was following Mamma up the grand staircase, on either side of which stood a line of gorgeous beef-eaters. Without a moment's hesitation the young lady stepped out of the offending garment, stooped, bundled it up and threw it at a beef-eater, who caught it and held it, mouth open, eyes goggling with horrified astonishment!" After these Drawing Rooms, tea-parties were held at which friends and relations gathered to admire the ladies in their finery.

In King Edward's reign Drawing Rooms became Courts and took place in the evening. A buffet supper, comprising every luxury and accompanied by plenty of excellent champagne, was served, and this fashion continued throughout the reign of King George V until war

put an end to such functions. After the War for some short time afternoon garden parties took the place of Courts. At these parties, at which the guests numbered several thousands, a tea consisting of tea, coffee, iced coffee, ices, sandwiches and cakes was served from a series of buffets placed in tents. The refreshments were supplied by a well-known firm of caterers and dispensed by neat waitresses in black dresses, white aprons and caps.

It was at one of these parties, when the titles and orders granted to women were yet so new that many of their recipients did not know when decorations should or should not be worn, that a garden-party guest who arrived proudly displaying her D.B.E.[1] was later seen hiding behind a tree while she detached it and dropped it into the obscurity of her hand-bag. Courts are now again held in the evenings as in the reign of King Edward VII.

Owing to the scarcity of food during the latter part of the Great War and the enormous rise in the cost of living, it became necessary for the Royal Family to set an example of simplicity and also to make economies in their households. It was explained in Parliament that, owing to his having cut down his expenses, the King was able to carry on without any deficit in the Civil List, and in 1916 to make voluntary contributions amounting to £100,000 to the Treasury.

As an example of the simplicity of Court functions in 1918, an Investiture may be instanced. This took place at 10.30 in the morning, and almost all those attending it arrived on foot. The doors of the Palace were open and but few servants visible. The guests left

[1] Dame of the Order of the British Empire.

wraps and umbrellas and were ushered into various rooms and there arranged according to the Order to be bestowed upon them. A gentleman of the household gave brief instructions regarding the procedure to be observed, and a servant handed round a basket full of gilded hooks, one of which was to be affixed on the left breast. The recipients of the various honours made their way in procession into the presence of the King, the men bowed, the ladies curtsied and His Majesty affixed the order to the hook.

But even at Investitures all does not go as it should. The Order bestowed upon a certain lady refused to slip on to its appointed hook. The procession waited. Still Order and hook refused to unite. The King appeared embarrassed, the lady no less so. At last, " May I fasten it myself, Your Majesty ? " murmured the lady. " Thank you very much," whispered the King, and again the procession moved onwards. In another room a table-load of cases was set out. An official placed each Order in a case, handed it to its owner and replaced the gilt hook in a basket. Wraps, umbrellas regained, a row of Press photographers faced, and so home.

# CHAPTER IV

## THE LIFE OF THE RICH

Visiting in great houses—Large families—Anæsthetics—The joke of bad drains—A Prussian writes of English domestic life—How dinner was served in 1828—Taking wine—The English Sunday—An arrogant aristocracy.

To know what life in great houses was like in the thirties and forties one cannot do better than consult the letters of the Hon. Emily Eden,[1] who was a sister of that Lord Auckland who became First Lord of the Admiralty and Governor-General of India. He, like his sister, was much given to visiting, and in a letter from Dropmore (Lord Grenville's) might well be describing a "doggy" household of the present day. "Came here late yesterday, everybody at dinner—Mary in such a fright you never saw—such a silence you never heard—room so hot you never felt—dinner so cold you never tasted—dogs so tiresome you never smelt."

Miss Eden gives an amusing glimpse of a visit to Chatsworth. "I shall continue to think a visit to Chatsworth a very great trouble . . . we go there with the best dispositions and wishing to be amused . . . loyal and well affected to the King of the Peak (the sixth Duke of Devonshire), supported by the knowledge that in the eyes of the neighbourhood we are covering ourselves with glory by frequenting the *Great House*; but with all

[1] *Life and Letters of the Hon. Emily Eden.*

these helps we have never been able to stay above two days . . . it is odd it should be so dull. . . . I have not yet attained the real Derbyshire feeling which would bring tears of admiration into my eyes whenever the Duke observed that it was a fine day."

Even in the thirties and forties, when central heating and bathrooms were still unknown, the comfort of the English house was proverbial. Miss Eden, then staying with Lady Grantham, in a letter to her sister, Lady Buckinghamshire, describes Newby Hall as "an excessively comfortable house with a stove to every passage and a fire in every room, servants and all, an excellent library, and a very pretty statue gallery, heaps of amusing books, and an arm-chair for every limb."

Her account of a visit to Montagu Hall does not sound so attractive from the point of view of bodily comfort: "The house was built in the reign of Henry VI . . . and has not been touched since apparently. There is a window from which Henry VII escaped, and one from which Oliver Cromwell looked out . . . every window has its legend, but none of them have any shutters or curtains and the doors never shut, and the weather has turned cold. . . . But there is the luncheon bell—that is always a cheerful incident."

We also gain a vivid little picture of life in a large family of small means from a letter of Lady Campbell to Miss Eden. "My only fear is that you and Lord Auckland will not be comfortable. So many children, not a very good cook . . . and a Life Guardsman who cannot wait, and to whom I dare not speak, as my remonstrances agitate him so much. I actually hear him perspire behind my chair." An account which might be as true,

IN THE LOBBY OF DRURY LANE THEATRE (ABOUT 1835)

(*From "The Queen"*)

except for the many children, of a soldier household of to-day as when it was written in 1827.

It was only a year or two earlier than the time at which this was written that Miss Coke writes to her *fiancé*, Mr. Spencer-Stanhope, " I wish you could have heard me this morning lecturing John Ransom (the footman) on making himself out of breath while waiting at table and making such a wind. Majesty [1] complained bitterly yesterday that *the servants snorted at him as if they had four nostrils, and blew all the powder out of his hair.*" [2] (It was this Miss Coke who wrote to her *fiancé* in English, French and Italian and addressed him as her *très cher* Mr. Stanhope, and declared that she would always call him Mr. Stanhope to express the respect which she feels for him ; " although I do not like to write Mr. Stanhope, I am resolved never to call you anything else.")

Miss Eden's mention of large families reminds us that in those days large families were quite *à la mode* in every rank of life. Her comments on this subject are entertaining : " The work of education," she writes, " goes on from morning to night. Six small Intellects constantly on the march, and Mary, of course, hatching a seventh child.

" I own I am glad I am not married, it is such a tiresome, fatiguing life," is her opinion after visiting a sister ; while when writing to Lady Charlotte Greville she suggests that " it would be such a good plan if, after people have as many children as they like, they were allowed to lie-in of any other article they fancied better . . . a set of Walter Scott's novels, or some fine china—or, in the

[1] " Coke of Norfolk," afterwards Lord Leicester.
[2] *The Letter-Bag of Lady Elizabeth Spencer-Stanhope.*

case of poor people, fire-irons and a coal-scuttle. . . . It would certainly be more amusing and more profitable, and there would be such anxiety to know what was born. Now it can be only a boy or a girl."

Mrs. Gladstone and Lady Lyttelton, who were married shortly before Queen Victoria, both had large families, and judging from Mrs. Gladstone's Diary, the birth of her babies seems to have caused little interruption in the social life.

One might have thought that at a time when anæsthetics were not used more to do might have been made over the production of a baby. In the diary of a lady whose children were born in the thirties and forties there are most casual references to her confinements. "Baby born," she writes, and goes on to make mention in far greater detail of various household matters. On another page, "Woke this morning to find that my Treasure had passed away." This is the only reference to the death of her infant son—the one boy in a family of five girls.

The Pussies—Mrs. Gladstone's term for herself and Lady Lyttelton—interchanged their servants, their clothes and even their furniture. In 1847 there were eleven children in the house under seven!—six Lytteltons and five Gladstones. A few years later Lady Lyttelton wrote that on entering a room at Hagley or Hawarden during one of "those great confluences of families which occur among the Glynnese there were seventeen children upon the floor under the age of twelve, and consequently all inkstands, books, carpets, furniture, ornaments, in intimate intermixture and in every form of fraction and confusion."

Even in the case of rich women the pains of producing

a family were not mitigated by anæsthetics, for chloroform was not used until after 1847. (It is said that Charles Darwin was deterred from becoming a doctor by the experience of being present at an operation on a child without an anæsthetic.)

"About Lady Emily—and her *etherial* confinement," writes Fanny Kemble [1] in that year, "did I not tell you that Mrs. C—— wrote me word from America that Fanny Longfellow had been brought to bed most prosperously under the beneficent influence of ether? At which my dear S—— C—— expresses some anxiety touching the authority of the Book of Genesis, which she thinks may be impaired if women continue, by means of ether, to escape from the special curse pronounced against them for their share in the original sin."

Later she mentions that fine ladies are amusing themselves with giving parties, at which they and their guests take chloroform as a pastime. Lady Castlereagh set the example, and described to Miss Kemble her sensations under the process. "I told her how imprudent and wrong I thought such experiments, and mentioned to her the lecture Brand gave upon the subject, in which the poor little guinea-pig, who underwent his illustrations for the benefit of the audience, died on the table during the lecture; to which she replied, 'Oh, yes: she knew that, *for she was present.*' Can you conceive, after such a spectacle, trying similar experiments upon one's ignorant self? Is it not very brave? Or is it only idiotical? . . ."

Lady Georgiana Peel [2] mentions that in 1839 "antiseptics and anæsthetics, though I believe they were known

[1] *Records of Later Life.* [2] *Memoirs of Lady Georgiana Peel.*

about, were not commonly used till many years after this time. The loss of life from the need of them was very great. Baby though I was, I remember some of the woe of those days. What made a deep impression on my baby mind, so deep that I still have it, was the nurse in flowing garments, who met us always when we came in from our walks, and always said 'Hush!'"[1]

"In those old careless days no one thought of bad drains. Indeed bad drains were considered rather a joke, and if they smelt, people considered it a sign of bad weather approaching, and were rather pleased to have the warning," says Lady Georgiana. Those were the days when people said that "God sent the babies," and doubtless the dirt and carelessness, mismanagement and bad heritage which killed or maimed them. This point of view is less popular to-day, when the tendency is to endeavour to produce the few and fit and to depend upon deliberate control of birth rather than plague, pestilence and famine as regulators of a population which, owing to the great development of science and sanitation, and consequent lengthening of life and lessening of infant mortality, has so vastly increased.

But to return to Miss Eden, she lets us learn of her own simple housekeeping at Greenwich—for she and her brother were none too rich for their position: "Think of our going down to dinner the other day, in our accustomed manner, soup and a mutton pie, and Lord and Lady Jersey, F. Villiers and Lord Castlereagh arrived *at* seven for dinner. No entrées, no fish, no nothing, and the cook ill. However, it turned out very pleasant."

[1] This was when Lady John Russell died of fever ten days after the birth of a little girl.

In 1834, when her brother had become First Lord of the Admiralty, she writes that the Admiralty is a splendid house to live in but requires quantities of servants, and the more there are the more discontented they are, a peculiarity which many other housekeepers have since observed.

Describing a visit to Penrhyn Castle, Miss Eden tells how the arches over the staircase looked like so much guipure lace carved in stone. Every table was carved in slate, marble or oak. "I slept in the state room, an enclosed field of blue damask and carved oak. The bed, which I should imagine did not cover more than an acre and a half, is said to have cost £1000. I never had an opportunity of judging whether there was work enough for the money, having slept generally near the edge." Old Mr. Pennant spent £28,000 for twelve years building the castle, and everything was made by his own Welsh people.

Another writer who gives us vivid glimpses of the domestic life of his day is Prince Pückler-Muskau,[1] a Prussian who travelled in England and Ireland in 1828 and 1829, and who wrote long letters to a lady in his own country. Being a foreigner, he thought it worth while to describe scenes and events which were of no particular interest to persons to whom they were an everyday occurrence. He describes in detail the arrangement of a country house:

"The servants," he tells us, "never wait in the anteroom,—here called the hall,—which, like the overture

[1] *A Tour in England, Ireland and France in the Years* 1828–1829, by a German Prince, Prince Pückler-Muskau.

of an opera, is designed to express the character of the whole: it is generally decorated with statues or pictures, and, like the elegant staircase and the various apartments, is appropriated to the use of the family and guests, who have the good taste rather to wait on themselves than have an attendant spirit always at their heels. The servants live in a large room in a remote part of the house, generally on the ground floor, where all, male and female, eat together, and where the bells of the whole house are placed. They are suspended in a row on the wall, numbered so that it is immediately seen in what room any one has rung: a sort of pendulum is attached to each, which continues to vibrate for ten minutes after the sound has ceased, to remind the sluggish of their duty.

"The females of the establishment have also a large common room, in which, when they have nothing else to do, they sew, knit, and spin: close to this is a closet for washing the glass and china, which comes within their province. Each of them, as well as of the men-servants, has her separate bed-chamber in the high-set storey. Only the 'housekeeper' and the 'butler' have distinct apartments below. Immediately adjoining that of the housekeeper is a room where coffee is made, and the store-room containing everything requisite for breakfast, which important meal, in England, belongs specially to her department. On the other side of the building is the washing establishment with a small courtyard attached. Near the butler's room is his pantry, a spacious fire-proof room, with closets on every side for the reception of the plate, which he cleans here, and the glass and china used at dinner, which must be delivered back into his custody as soon as it is washed by the women. All these arrange-

A FAMILY IN 1832

EDOUART'S SHADOW PICTURE OF THE BOURLET FAMILY CUT IN 1832. THE LITTLE GIRLS IN THEIR LOW-NECKED DRESSES AND LONG PANTALETTES DANCE FOR THE ENJOYMENT OF PAPA WHILE MAMMA PLAYS UPON THE "INSTRUMENT"—AN UPRIGHT GRAND PIANO, THE FRONT OF WHICH WAS FILLED IN WITH FLUTED SILK

*(From "Ancestors in Silhouette" by Mrs. F. Nevill Jackson)*

ments are executed with the greatest punctuality. A locked staircase leads from the pantry into the beer and wine cellar, which is likewise under the butler's jurisdiction."

The Prince is scarcely correct in ĭmagining that in most households each servant was allotted a separate bedchamber: at Buckingham Palace and in most great houses the housemaids and the men-servants were housed in dormitories.

He also mentions that when staying in the country he walked early in the morning with the charming little Fanny, the youngest daughter of the house, who is not yet "out"—a term used then as now to signify that a young lady has emerged from the schoolroom. We may picture charming little Fanny, her hair drawn up into loops high at the back of her head and arranged in curls over either ear, in her high-waisted, short-skirted muslin dress with its *gigot* sleeves, tripping demurely by the side of a gentleman in tight pantaloons, Hessian boots and high-collared coat of blue or bottle-green cloth.

Fanny conducted her guest round the dairy and the aviary.

"I told you once before," writes the Prince, "that the dairy is one of the principal decorations of an English park, and stands by itself quite away from the cow-house. It is generally an elegant pavilion. There can be no better place of refreshment after a walk. It is, of course, surrounded by a flower-garden, which the English love to attach to all their buildings.

"The aviary, which elsewhere is filled with gold

pheasants and other foreign birds, was here more usefully tenanted; and was exclusively devoted to cocks and hens, geese, ducks, peacocks, and pigeons. It was, however, from its extraordinary cleanliness and nice adaptation, a very pretty and agreeable sight. Twice a day are the yards, which are provided with the most beautiful receptacles of water,—the separate houses, pigeon-holes, etc.,—twice a day are they cleaned: the straw nests of the hens were so pretty; the perches on which the fowls roost, so smooth and clean; the water in the stone basins which served as duck-ponds, so clear; the barley and the boiled rice (equal to Parisian 'riz au lait') so tempting, that one thought one's self in the Paradise of fowls."

Of Wilton, near Salisbury, the Earl of Pembroke's seat, he writes:

"The Countess's garden, upon which the library opens, is laid out in the old French style, and is terminated by a small very richly ornamented temple, which has one singularity. It was built by Holbein: it does, however, no credit to his taste; but is, on the contrary, an ugly overloaded thing. The garden is extremely pretty and elegant: it reflects honour on English women of rank, that most of them are distinguished for their taste and skill in this beautiful art."

This love of beautiful gardens is a marked trait amongst Englishwomen to this day, when flower shows are some of the most popular events of the London season.

Speaking of English manners and customs, Prince Pückler says that "it requires a considerable fortune to

keep up a country-house; for custom demands many luxuries, and, according to the aspiring and imitative manners of the country, as much (in the main things) at the shopkeeper's house as at the Duke's;—a handsomely fitted-up house, with elegant furniture, plate, servants in new and handsome liveries, a profusion of dishes and foreign wines, rare and expensive dessert, and in all things an appearance of superfluity—'plenty' as the English call it. As long as there are visitors in the house, this way of life goes on; but many a family atones for it by meagre fare when alone; for which reason nobody here ventures to pay a visit in the country without being invited, and these invitations usually fix the day and hour. The acquaintances are generally numerous; and as both room and the time allotted to the reception of guests are small, one must give place to another."

The Prince is of the opinion that this can hardly be called true hospitality; it is rather the display of one's possessions, for the purpose of dazzling as many as possible. After a family has thus kept open house for a month or two, he says, they go for the remainder of the time they have to spend in the country to make visits at the houses of others. The one hospitable month in England costs as much as a wealthy Prussian landed proprietor spends in a whole year.

Pückler describes the routine of an English dinner.

"The gentlemen lead the ladies into the dining-room, not as in France, by the hand, but by the arm; and here, as there, are emancipated from the necessity of those antiquated bows, which even in some of the best society in Germany are exchanged every time one hands out a

lady. On the other hand, there is a most anxious regard to rank, in the midst of all of which the strangest blunders are made as to that of foreigners. I execrated mine to-day, as it brought me to the head of the table, while my friend very cleverly slipped himself in between the pretty sisters. When you enter, you find the whole of the first course on the table, as in France.

"After the soup is removed, and the covers are taken off, every man helps the dish before him, and offers some of it to his neighbour. If he wishes for anything else, he must ask across the table, or send a servant for it;—a very troublesome custom, in place of which, some of the most elegant travelled gentlemen have adopted the more convenient German fashion of sending the servants round with the dishes.

"It is not usual to take wine without drinking to another person. When you raise your glass, you look fixedly at the one with whom you are drinking, bow your head, and then drink with great gravity. . . . It is esteemed a civility to challenge anybody in this way to drink; and a messenger is often sent from one end of the table to the other to announce to B—— that A—— wishes to take wine with him; whereupon each, sometimes with considerable trouble, catches the other's eye, and goes through the ceremony of the prescribed nod with great formality, looking at the moment very like a Chinese mandarin.

"At the conclusion of the second course comes a sort of intermediate dessert of cheese, butter, salad, raw celery, and the like; after which ale, sometimes thirty or forty years old, and so strong that when thrown on the fire it blazes like spirit, is handed about. The table-cloth is then removed: under it, at the best tables, is a finer, upon

AUGUST EDOUART WAS A FAMOUS SILHOUETTE ARTIST IN THE SECOND QUARTER OF THE 19TH CENTURY AND WE SEE HERE HIS PORTRAIT OF MR. AND MRS. MCKENZIE, THE LADY'S LAP DOG AND THAT FASHIONABLE INSTRUMENT THE HARP

THE COCKBURN FAMILY CUT IN SILHOUETTE BY EDOUART IN 1830. THESE PICTURES WERE KNOWN AS SHADE OR SHADOW PICTURES AND *DECOUPURES*

*(From "Ancestors in Silhouette" by Mrs. F. Nevill Jackson)*

which the dessert is set. At inferior ones it is placed on the bare polished table. It consists of all sorts of hot-house fruits, which are here of the finest quality, Indian and native preserves, stomachic ginger, confitures, and the like. Clean glasses are set before every guest, and, with the dessert plates and knives and forks, small fringed napkins are laid. Three decanters are usually placed before the master of the house, generally containing claret, port, and sherry, or madeira. The host pushes these in stands, or in a little silver waggon on wheels, to his neighbour on the left. Every man pours out his own wine, and if a lady sits next him, also helps her; and so on till the circuit is made, when the same process begins again. Glass jugs filled with water happily enable foreigners to temper the brandy which forms so large a component part of English wines. After the dessert is set on, all the servants leave the room: if more is wanted the bell is rung, and the butler alone brings it in. The ladies sit a quarter of an hour longer, during which time sweet wines are sometimes served, and then rise from the table. The men rise at the same time, one opens the door for them, and as soon as they are gone, draw closer together; the host takes the place of the hostess, and the conversation turns upon subjects of local and everyday interest. . . . Every man is, however, at liberty to follow the ladies . . . who received us in a 'salon' grouped around a large table on which were tea and coffee."

This Prussian gentleman, delighted as he is with much that he sees, comments sharply on the matter of Sunday observance in England. He says:

"the English have stamped the day with a sort of death-

like character ; dancing, music, and singing are forbidden ; indeed the severely pious hang their canary-birds in some remote corner, that no voice of song may offend their ears during these holy hours. . . . No bread must be baked and no useful work performed ; but drunkenness and other vices thrive more luxuriantly than on the week-days. . . . The streets are never so bestrewed with drunken people as on Sunday evenings ; nor are the resorts of vice ever so filled, while many English people think dancing on a Sunday unquestionably a greater crime than a little theft."

Otherwise the harshest criticisms of this Prussian noble are concerned with the haughtiness and arrogance of the English aristocracy ; strange reading at a time when the Prussian Junker is notorious throughout the world for these same qualities.

And yet it is not surprising that Prince Pückler should have thought that the aristocracy were haughty. The literature of the first seventy or eighty years of the century proves that his criticism was a true one. Let us instance a particularly delightful example of pride from *Squire Osbaldeston : His Autobiography*. The Countess of Carlisle of that day was indisposed and sent for the local medical practitioner. So great was she, so humble he, that the lady felt it impossible to discourse with him directly, therefore a three-cornered conversation was carried on through the medium of the Countess's maid. Eventually the apothecary informed the maid, who informed her mistress, that it would be necessary to bleed the patient, to which, after a pause, the lady replied, " Inform the doctor that he *may* bleed the Countess of Carlisle."

## CHAPTER V

### THE LIFE OF THE RICH (*continued*)

People of importance—Painted carriages—Poor relations—The worship of convention—Dinners from the confectioner—Unpunctual guests—Etiquette books—When ladies could not walk alone—Floral decorations—Social position—Square dances and waltzing—Professional ball-giving in the 1830's—The revolting daughter—Afternoon tea—Carving—The after-dinner tea-table.

During the first half of the nineteenth century People of Importance did not hide their importance. They drove about in beautifully gilded and painted carriages with a bewigged coachman and powdered footmen. A lady born in 1829 described how the footmen stood behind the carriage, the coachman sitting alone on the hammer-cloth in front. The State carriage, or, as it was sometimes called, the Painted Carriage or the Charyot, was used for going out to dinner-parties and very generally during the London season. A distinction was made; thus, when Lady —— —— as a girl went out with her governess, only one footman stood behind, though two were employed when her father or mother was in the carriage. The footmen wore silk stockings, plush breeches and hair-powder. It was a common sight during the evening in the season to see these painted carriages with wonderful coats of arms on the panels returning to the stables after having set down their owners, with the two footmen sitting on either side of the coachman, but with their legs dangling over the hammer-cloth and their backs to the

driver. There was not enough room for them on the hammer-cloth to "sit square." It was the great delight of the guttersnipes to pinch the calves of the footmen standing on the backs of the carriages whenever there was a block in the traffic.

(Apropos of the word "charyot," even in the eighties and nineties old men returning to the fashion of their youth might be heard to speak of a "poutty" (pretty) woman, a "yaller" flower, a "chainey" (china) plate and of the "charyot," and in some old accounts it is noted that a new chariot bought in 1826 is to cost £315.)

This same lady, speaking of people of good birth, whose means did not allow them to live in the same way as their fellows—of poor relations, in fact—explained that people were supposed to look after their kindred, to help the sons to some position, to see that widows and unprovided girls had a sufficiency. Nevertheless, the fate of unprovided women was in those days miserable: either they must strive to manage on minute incomes, live as hangers-on in the families of relatives, or become companions or governesses. Aristocratic women of small means with daughters to marry made violent efforts to keep up appearances. A Mr. H—— describes a lady who throughout the season lived in Eaton Place, kept a carriage and gave dinners. In the summer the front windows were papered, the family went out of town. In reality they dismissed their servants, ceased to job a carriage and inhabited two or three rooms at the back of the house, were waited on by a charwoman and lived on toast, tea and poached eggs, their letters being addressed to and forwarded from a country address!

Throughout the Victorian era convention reigned supreme in society; every one must behave like every one else. Nowadays no one is surprised at anything which any one may do; then only the very bold spirits ventured to go their own way. There were such, of course, and one of them, a spinster of forty, who lived in London, made a feature of little dinners of eight at which she offered her guests clear soup, turbot, the best saddle of mutton procurable, an apricot roly-poly pudding, Stilton cheese and "*crisp* biscuits made from my mother's recipe." All these her cook could make to perfection. Her suet roll was light as a feather. "Why should I feed on filth from the confectioner or engage a job cook and upset my small household because two or three friends dine with me? If they do not like the fare I provide, why, let them stay away." But they did not stay away. They came and came again.

According to Lady Dorothy Nevill, who appears to have known every one of importance during a long life, Disraeli set the fashion of employing a caterer to provide his dinners at a fixed price, and we have but to consult Thackeray[1] to discover how the Fitzroy Timmins, who lived in a neat little house in a good situation and were cousins of the Earl of Bungay, "gave a dinner to twenty disagreeable people of importance" with the help of the caterer and his minions.

Lady Dorothy Nevill[2] says that being late for luncheon or dinner in Victorian times was considered a social crime.

"Unpunctuality was introduced at a later period by

[1] *A Little Dinner at Timmins's.*
[2] *Life and Letters of Lady Dorothy Nevill*, by Ralph Nevill.

certain rich American women and listless idlers who thought it smart to keep people waiting. The vulgar habit spread, and some ladies, whose wealth had softened them into partial imbecility, even got into the habit of boasting that they never could be in time. One noted for arriving half through dinner was even said to pride herself upon having forgotten the taste of soup."

Another consistent late comer earned for herself at a later date the title of " the late Miss So-and-So." Here perhaps an incident may be recalled of a Victorian lady who was giving a large dinner-party. A guest, a woman of importance, did not arrive. The company waited. Conversation began to dribble feebly. At last, " Has any one heard anything of Lady So-and-So ? " Cried someone in shocked tones, " Oh ! have you not heard ? She died yesterday." " In that case," observed the hostess, " it is no use waiting," and rang the bell.

A still better story is told of the late Lord Dudley, who used to say that the most unpunctual people he ever knew were two distinguished brothers : " If you asked Robert for Wednesday at seven, you got Charles on Thursday at eight."

Lady Dorothy Nevill recounts that she remembered Lady Blessington driving about London in a barouche with her head muffled up in a turban, and she met Count D'Orsay at one of the " breakfasts " which were then popular, and could recall his brown coat and tight pantaloons—his dress was described as

> " A coat of chocolate, a vest of snow,
> Well brush'd his whiskers, as his boots below,
> A short-napp'd beaver, prodigal in brim,
> With trousers tightened to a well-turned limb."

DRIVING IN THE PARK

IN THE PARK ON A GLOWING AFTERNOON IN JULY COUNT D'ORSAY DRIVES PAST, ADMIRED BY LADIES ON THE ARMS OF THEIR MALE ESCORTS AND ALSO BY THE LADY ACCOMPANIED BY THE BOY IN BUTTONS WHO CARRIES HER LAP-DOG

*(From "D'Horsay; or The Follies of the Day" by a Man of Fashion)*

In such garments he could only have been surpassed by Disraeli, who is spoken of as dining in attire which included a shirt-front of book muslin mounted over bright pink satin. Men were not condemned to such monotonous attire then as is now the case, for Mr. Charles Dickens wore a pink shirt embroidered in white when he dined with Lord and Lady John Russell in Chesham Place.

Apropos of men's clothes, in an etiquette book[1] of that period, a red and gilt book of so small a size "as to fit the smallest waistcoat pocket," gentlemen are warned that unless proper attention is paid to dress, "they may fail in the estimation of friends and create suspicion among everyday acquaintances." They are begged "to refrain from the gaudy attire of the gent and to fail to allow the portrait of a ballet girl to disfigure the centre of a shirt-front which should be spotless white." They are also entreated never "to wear a bad hat," and advised to wear "a black dress coat, dark satin waistcoat, black nether teguments, black cloth dress boots and a plain silk handkerchief, because white chokers are now abandoned except by dull old fogies."

But the Diamond Etiquette Book does not confine itself to the etiquette of dress: it advises that if you determine to give a dinner at all, it should be well done: do not invite a "conglomeration": never allow the conversation to flag, especially before dinner, and on no account convey food to the mouth by means of a knife or dispense fruit with a knife, "because spoons are generally pretty numerous upon the table." When a lady gives an evening party, "light conversation should

[1] *The Diamond Etiquette for Gentlemen.*

be maintained by the host and hostess until the majority of the guests have arrived, after which both may meander about the rooms entertaining their guests and seeing that none are allowed to mope in corners."

In another etiquette book [1] several pages are devoted to the etiquette of the "weed." A man must never smoke nor even ask to smoke in the company of "the fair"; never smoke in the street in daylight; never smoke in a room used by ladies; never smoke on a racecourse; and *never* must he offer a cigar to a clergyman above the rank of a curate. "I have no wish to see English girls light their own cigarettes," says the anonymous author of this book, but he warns the "dear creatures" that "a *little* concession (to the smoking habits of men) is prudent, for the pipe is the worst enemy of women."

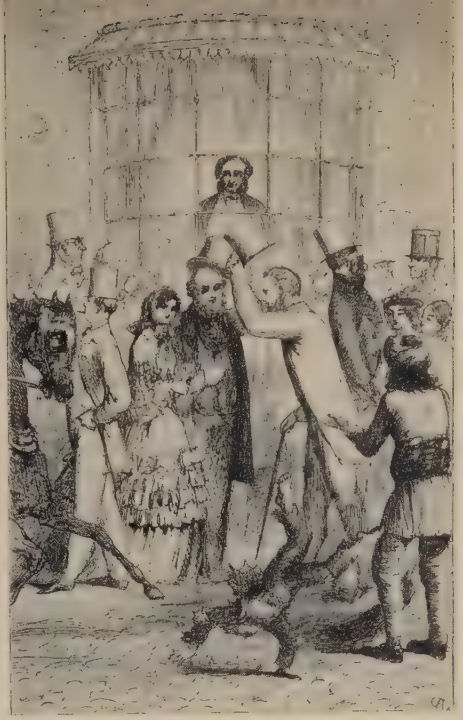
There are etiquette books for men, or rather "gentlemen," and ladies, and the schoolboy [2] is not forgotten. It seems strange that at a time when school life was so rough, such prim deportment is required of the schoolboy. He is advised that "his looks should be complacent and composed, modest yet confident, affable and condescending." He is also reminded that "the circumstance of your being sent to school places you above numbers of indigent and vulgar children who are suffered to wander about the streets," and he is exhorted "to invite, implore and cherish the advice of his parents and teachers." Further, he is to be affable and condescending and to reply to every one according to the rank and sex of the person addressed—in fact, a perfect little prig.

[1] *The Habits of Good Society, a Handbook of Etiquette for Ladies and Gentlemen.*

[2] *Proper Deportment of Schoolboys*, by J. Robinson, master of the Free School, Bunny.

THE PROPER DEPORTMENT OF SCHOOLBOYS IS EXPLAINED BY MR. ROBINSON OF BUNNY. HE BEGS THAT THE LOOKS OF THE BOYS SHALL BE "COMPLACENT AND COMPOSED, MODEST YET CONFIDENT," AND THAT THEY SHALL BE "AFFABLE AND CONDESCENDING"

*(From "The Proper Deportment of Schoolboys")*



"THE MAN IN THE CLUB WINDOW" FROM "THE HABITS OF GOOD SOCIETY: A HANDBOOK OF ETIQUETTE FOR LADIES AND GENTLEMEN"

According to Lady Dorothy Nevill, one of the greatest social changes of the century is the enormous latitude now allowed to young ladies to do what they like and go where they like according to their own sweet will. " My mother," writes Mr. Ralph Nevill, " would often describe the very different state of affairs which prevailed in her youth. She said they were not supposed to go in cabs alone or walk about the West End without a male escort or a footman—a young lady riding without a groom in Hyde Park now scarcely rouses comment, but then it would have been a grave social offence."

It was not only the young girls who were so much chaperoned. Young married women in society were obliged to be very circumspect in their behaviour. In 1863 or thereabouts Lady Paget,[1] when staying with Lady Ely in Prince's Gate, says that she has to hire a brougham in which to go out shopping, and only walks in the Park when accompanied by her husband. She had never been out to dinner or luncheon by herself, as, " if your husband could not come, the proper thing was to refuse."

As late as 1890 the parents of a girl who " for fun "—and accompanied by her maid—went for a drive on the top of an omnibus were greatly shocked, and two middle-aged ladies now smile over an incident of their youth when for the first time, at the ages of seventeen and eighteen, they were permitted to walk from Grosvenor Place to Gorringe's in Buckingham Palace Road unattended: " Anything might happen to us, we felt. But nothing did, except that we bought silk stockings from a pretty polite girl who probably would have thought it as strange

[1] *Embassies of Other Days*, by Walpurga, Lady Paget.

not to be allowed to walk alone as we thought it to be allowed to do so."

In early mid-Victorian days ladies were supposed to require much protection. They were armed about by " gentlemen " (for gentlemen were called gentlemen then, not " men " or " boys," as is now the fashion). In the mid-1800's it was highly improper to walk into the theatre except on the arm of a " gentleman," while to-day to do so would appear somewhat familiar and in bad taste.

Women of position employed a footman to attend them on their walks, later on a maid replaced the man, and later still it was considered permissible for young ladies to walk alone in certain parts of London. But independently-minded people did even then walk alone almost anywhere. Miss F——, daughter of a famous artist, did so; a handsome young woman, she was never molested except on one occasion, and that when she was chaperoned by her two little brothers and was walking in Brighton! This necessity—or imagined necessity—for constant chaperonage must often have made life a weariness, physical and mental, to the chaperon and her charge.

It is this same Miss F—— who, speaking of her girlhood, thinks her mother was one of the first people to introduce the fashion of decorating rooms with flowers. She describes how her mother came back from a day in the country bringing handfuls of moon daisies and grasses and arranged them in her drawing-room, where they caused considerable comment, one lady remarking somewhat sharply that " it was strange indeed to sit in a room with a collection of weeds."

At that time, when flowers were wanted for a dinner-party table decoration or for a wedding bouquet, they were bought at Solomon's in Piccadilly or in Covent Garden Market. There were hardly any flower shops then, though soon after flower women appeared, and soon after that again flower shops were started.

Undoubtedly, however, in 1819 flowers were used to deck the rooms; witness the description of my lady's room at Cumnor[1] and that of the boudoir and bedroom of Miss Alice Mildmay.[2]

Fanny Kemble, the popular actress, who enjoyed a position in London society seldom if ever before accorded to an actress in the earlier part of the nineteenth century, mentions the floral decorations at a concert given for a charity by the Duchess of Sutherland at Stafford House in 1844.[3] The tickets were two guineas apiece, on the morning of the concert five guineas. Rachel was to recite, Liszt to play, and Miss Adelaide Kemble (Fanny's sister) to sing.

"The whole scene was one of the gayest and most splendid possible, the entertainment and assembly taking place in the great hall and staircase of Stafford House, with its scarlet floor-cloths, and marble stairs and balustrades, and pillars of scagliola, and fretted roof of gold and white, and skylight surrounded and supported by gigantic gilt caryatides.

"The wide noble flights of steps and long broad galleries, filled with brilliantly dressed groups; with the

[1] *Wives and Daughters*, by Mrs. Gaskell.
[2] *Almack's*, anonymous novel.
[3] Stafford House, now the London Museum.

sunlight raining down in streams on the panels and pillars of the magnificent hall, on the beautiful faces of the women, and the soft sheen and brilliant varied colouring of their clothes, and on perfect masses of flowers, piled in great pyramids of every form and hue in every niche and corner, or single plants covered with an exquisite profusion of perfect bloom, standing here and there in great precious china vases stolen from the Arabian Nights ; it really was one of the grandest and gayest shows you can imagine," writes Miss Kemble.

We gain an idea of gorgeousness and gaiety from this description ; but Charles Francis Adams, the American Minister in London, records that " the general aspect of Society is profound gravity. People look serious at a ball, at a dinner, or a ride on horseback or in a carriage, in Parliament or at Court, in the theatres or at galleries," he complains, and suggests that the great object in life is social position. To this end domestic establishments are sustained to rival each other. The horses must be fine, the carriages as large and cumbrous as possible, the servants as showy in livery as anybody's . . . not because each person takes pleasure in the display, but because everybody else does the same thing. Later in the century persons who worked hard to improve their social position became known as " climbers," a designation which is still in use.

Lady Jersey, going out in Society as a young girl, writes of Stafford House, Grosvenor House, Northumberland House, Argyll Lodge and Airlie Lodge on Campden Hill, and Syon (at Chiswick), at which great entertainments took place. In those days there was still a question

as to the propriety of waltzing. Some of the girls were only allowed to dance square dances, and young girls went back to their chaperons between the dances: sitting out did not come in until some years later.

It is interesting to note that the professional ball-giver existed a hundred years ago and behaved in much the same way as her successor of to-day. There is a delightful description of a ball given by a Lady Hauton for a Lady Birmingham in *Almack's*,[1] a novel which was published anonymously but which was written by Miss Marianne Spencer-Stanhope.

"All was now activity and bustle at Birmingham House for the approaching ball. Lady Birmingham had committed the care of herself and her conscience, in the form of her visiting-book, into the hands of Lady Hauton; and much and long had the Countess to labour, in order to weed away all Lady Birmingham's real friends and connections from the important list. In this refined age, relationship goes for nothing; the freemasonry of *set* is everything. 'So much do I think of it,' said Lady Hauton, 'that, I assure you, in a certain way I always cut my own mother; I never ask her to my *choisies*. She is not in the least *des nôtres*, and would be quite *de trop*, so I only admit her to my squeezes. When I first married, I was young and inexperienced: one night I remember, at Lady Norbury's, I was going to chat with

[1] *Almack's* was written by Miss Marianne Spencer-Stanhope. It was published in 1826, and made a great stir in fashionable circles. Miss Stanhope was forty when she wrote this extremely clever satire. Two years later she married Mr. Hudson of Tadworth Court. See *The Letter-bag of Lady Elizabeth Spencer-Stanhope*, also *Life's Little Day*, by A. M. W. Stirling.

my sister, Lady Richmond; but Hauton, who was always the finest of the fine, pulled me back: "I have at last got you into good company, Georgiana," said he; "and really I must keep you there." '

" 'Bless me!' said Lady Birmingham, quite naturally; 'and Lady Richmond your ladyship's own sister too; and married to a Peer! How strange!'

" 'I should have lost *caste* by being with her and all that sort of set,' said the Countess; 'and really, if I have to do with it, Lady Birmingham, your ball must be entirely composed of what everybody calls good company —of real *ton*. Now let me look at your list.' "

Up to about 1835 Almack's, the forerunner of the smart Dance Club of to-day, was the haunt of the great world. Its affairs were managed by a committee of great ladies and it was extremely difficult for any outsider to obtain entrance. Princess Lieven, the Russian Ambassador's wife[1] (described by Princess Esterhazy as small, round, black, animated and somewhat spiteful), was an important member of the committee. It was she who in 1815 or 1816 introduced the waltz, while Lady Jersey was responsible for introducing the quadrille on her return from Paris in 1815.

It was at Almack's that Thackeray gave two lectures, and Fanny Kemble says that she found him "standing like a forlorn, disconsolate giant in the middle of the room, gazing about him. 'Oh, Lord!' he exclaimed, as he shook hands with me, 'I'm sick at my stomach with fright.' " (Had he felt as forlorn, one wonders, when at

[1] Sir Thomas Lawrence's portrait of Princess Lieven gives no idea of roundness. He pictures her as a thin woman.

AT ALMACK'S, WHICH UP TO ABOUT 1835 WAS THE HAUNT OF THE GREAT WORLD. IT WAS MANAGED BY A COMMITTEE OF LADIES WHO MADE IT ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE FOR ANYONE NOT IN THE INNER RING OF SOCIETY TO OBTAIN ADMITTANCE

*From "Life in London" by Pierce Egan)*

the age of five he was sent home to England to be educated, and the ship touching at St. Helena he was taken by the black servant in charge of him to see Napoleon? "That's Napoleon. He eats three sheep a day and as many children as he can lay hands on," explained the servant.) It was at Almack's too that according to Disraeli a wonderful duke "galloped with grace and waltzed with vigour," and it was to Almack's that the great Duke of Wellington was denied admission because he arrived a few minutes late.

Waltzes and quadrilles at first were considered very shocking, for then, as now, what was new was improper. Later, in 1842, the polka was introduced and was for the first time danced in public at Lady Elizabeth Spencer-Stanhope's, where people stood on chairs and rout seats to watch it. The waltz, the tango, the fox trot—all in turn have been accused of undermining the morals of Society. No one has very much faith in Society's morals, it would seem, for in the sixties, when coffee was first served after luncheon, there was a great to-do. It was feared that young men would stay on after luncheon drinking coffee with their fascinating hostesses, and then——!

To-day a curate might drink coffee with a chorus girl and no one would concern himself about it, while well-brought-up young women go to the theatre with young men, and sup and dance at the fashionable hotels with little or no chaperonage. In spite of the freedom which is permitted her, the young girl seems neither more nor less fast than the girls of other generations, though it is the fashion to regret their frivolity and ill manners. Is it not recorded that Mr. Gladstone grieved with Mrs.

Humphry Ward regarding the naughtiness of the girl of their day, while Mrs. Lynn Lynton wrote articles on "The Girl of the Period" which appeared in the *Saturday Review* and in the *Queen*, and caused considerable comment. The "Revolting Daughter," as she was nicknamed, became a feature of a day which knew not what was to come in the shape of the bobbed, breeched and cigarette-smoking war girl who did such good work and so scandalised her elders. The young girl of the day has always been "faster" than the young girl of her mother's day, and has been assisted in her fastness by the "Blood," the "Swell," the "Johnnie," the "Masher" and the "Knut"—slang terms for the young men of the moment.

Fanny Kemble, who was much given to visiting her friends, gives interesting descriptions of Society in her day. She describes a visit to Belvoir to stay with Lady Willoughby in 1842. She found

"the interior of the house handsome, and in good taste; and the whole mode of life stately and splendid, as well as extremely pleasant and comfortable, the Duke and his family kind and courteous hosts, and the society very easy and free from stiffness or constraint of any sort.

"Every morning the duke's band marched round the castle, playing all sorts of sprightly music, to summon us to breakfast, and we had the same agreeable warning that dinner was ready. As soon as the dessert was placed on the table, singers came in, and performed four pieces of music; two by a very sweet single voice, and two by three or more voices.

"This, with intervals for conversation, filled up the

allotted time before the ladies left the table. In the evening we had music, of course, and one evening we adjourned to the ball-room, where we danced all night, the duke leading a country-dance, in which his house-maids and men-cooks were vigorously figuring at the same time."

She also describes a visit to The Hoo, the home of Lady Dacre:

"We had Lady Dacre driving in the open carriage to a cricket match seven miles away, a game into the mysteries of which some of us wished to be initiated." (Gentlemen then played cricket in top-hats.) It was at Hoo that they ride, there is much music, Fanny Kemble reads, and her sister Adelaide reads some of Lady Dacre's translations from Petrarch. "We dine at 7.30, after which we generally have music and purse-making and discussions, poetical and political, wine and water biscuits, and bed betimes."

The purses mentioned were long bags made of netted silk generally adorned with beads, the contents being kept in both ends by means of a couple of rings.

Fanny also tells of her first introduction to afternoon tea, which took place during her visit to Belvoir:

"I received on several occasions private and rather mysterious invitations to the Duchess of Bedford's room, and found her with a 'small and select' circle of female guests, busily employed in brewing and drinking tea, with her Grace's own private tea-kettle. I do not believe

that the now universally honoured and observed institution of ' five-o'clock tea ' dates further back in the annals of English civilization than this very private and, I think, rather shamefaced practice of it."

A——, Lady S——, who moved in very exclusive society, writes that

" ' Le five o'clocker ' never was the custom in my home. My mother thought it a quite unnecessary meal. On the other hand, my father loved his cup of tea at that hour and used always to come to our schoolroom for it. I have always heard that the people who set the fashion of these elaborate meals were the old Duchess of Bedford (Anna Maria), at Woburn and in Belgrave Square, the Sydneys in Cleveland Square and my Aunt Harriett, Duchess of Sutherland. But the example was soon followed. Any who cared for tea used to assemble in my invalid brother's sitting-room. The Paget family were very fond of their ' five o'clock,' all the more probably because their redoubtable parent, the old Marquis of Anglesey of Waterloo fame, sternly forbade it. Nevertheless, his daughters before their marriages achieved it on the sly, and on one occasion, as Lady Adelaide Cadogan told me, hearing footsteps in the passage, hastily hid the tray and its contents under the sofa."

" I can't remember," A——, Lady S——, writes at another time, " when carving ' off the table ' became the rule. My father always carved at luncheon and dinner, and both he and Uncle Sutherland were most expert carvers. In fact all the hosts of *that* generation *were*, because they had to do it—there was nobody else. And

HAIRDRESSING IN 1863

IN THOSE DAYS DOING THE HAIR WAS A LENGTHY PROCESS AND THE EFFECT VERY DIFFERENT FROM THE BOYISH BOBBING AND SHINGLING OF TO-DAY

the ladies carved well too. I suppose there were a greater number of servants then than now, but ours was rather a simple household. Country neighbours employed parlourmaids and a clumsy boy in buttons. Both boys and buttons were quite *de rigueur*. But there was also another institution very regular as I remember. Dinner was not so late as in the present day—generally at 7.30—and at nine o'clock the tea-table came in and the guests assembled round it. My mission was, even before I was promoted to the late dinner, to pour out the after-dinner tea and to remember how every one liked it, and to sit there 'seen but not heard' as was expected of a nicely brought up girl in those far-off days."

# CHAPTER VI

## THE LIFE OF THE RICH (*continued*)

A young American visits England in 1875—Pictures of social life—Table manners—Meal-times—The House of Commons—A visit to Lord and Lady Spencer—Americanisms and Englishisms—A visit to the Duke of Argyll—A young visitor in 1890–1900—The newly-rich of that day—Bridge—Smoking—Men or gentlemen—The country-house kitchen—The coming of the car—The American invasion—Mrs. Grundy's downfall—The bicycle—War and the newly poor.

From the diary of a young American [1] visiting England in 1875–1876 enlightening pictures of the social life of that time are obtained. This Mr. Dana, who brings good letters of introduction, is evidently surprised by the extreme hospitality of English folk. He says that in America hospitality at that time was a burden to host and guest:

"A three-days' visit is a burden: a week's is torture, it being considered necessary to devote practically all the host's time to the guest. The English, on the other hand, have carried hospitality to a fine art. Life goes on pretty much as usual. At breakfast the host says such and such things are going on or suggests certain plans for the visitors. What would the guests like to do? Perhaps the guests plan something between themselves, and the host and hostess are free to join or not as they please. Then at lunch and afternoon tea there is a

[1] *Hospitable England in the Seventies*, by Richard Henry Dana.

gathering of those who happen to be about, and perhaps more plans are talked over. It is only at dinner and in the evening that all are brought together and conversation is kept up. This makes hospitality easy and therefore frequent."

The elder Mr. Dana, who knew English ways well, gave his son good advice. He told him when meeting distinguished Englishmen to treat them in the same way that he would treat Mr. Lowell, Mr. Longfellow, Dr. Holmes, and others, with the courtesy due from a younger man to an elder, and to be perfectly natural and at ease, and "neither forth putting nor, on the other hand, to take the lower seat, because in English society the Bible parable will not hold. They are not likely to say, 'Friend, go up higher.' I find this advice works perfectly and all is natural and easy, delightful and intimate."

Mr. Dana comments on the obsequiousness ingrained into the English people for the nobility, though he also mentions that once when making unnecessary use of a title when speaking to Lady Clifden, "I saw she fairly cringed." By Mr. Dana's day titles were made less use of than had been the case in the twenties and thirties, when people living in the same social set m'lorded and m'ladied each other with much frequency.

Mr. Dana mentions that the Lord Coleridge of that day is quite democratic in his notions, at least in theory:

"He was knighted about seven years ago, and he told me that his wife, who was then first called Lady Coleridge, found she received far greater attention in the shops

simply on account of her title, and that the tradespeople would begin attending to her before others who had come in ahead, but she insisted upon taking her turn.

" He also told me that at one time he went with the Duke of Wellington to a railway station, and on coming to the booking office found there was some delay about the tickets, the men asking those in line to wait. Then Coleridge said, ' I see, Your Grace, that they make us stand in line and wait like the rest.' As soon as the ticket-seller heard that there was a duke in line, he immediately stopped what he was doing and insisted upon giving them their tickets ahead of the rest."

Mr. Dana mentions Spencer House, beautifully situated on St. James's Place, looking out on Green Park and opposite Bridgewater House (then and now the property of an Earl of Ellesmere), one of the few great London houses which have not changed hands to be used for some other purpose than that for which they were first intended.

" Of course," says he, " there was the lofty ' Jeames ' in full togs at the door and a dignified footman in handsome livery between the front door and the reception-room, and others to wait on table. What struck me most in the details was the absence of napkins at lunch, though it was what we should call a heavy lunch, with soup, chicken and game, vegetables, fruit, wines, etc. When Mr. Mackintosh came to Boston, at his first lunch at Mr. Nathan Appleton's, his father-in-law's, it was said that he threw his napkin on the floor. Appleton, supposing there was a defect in the napkin, had

another one brought. This he threw on the floor also, and upon being asked if there was anything the matter with his napkin said, 'We never use napkins at lunch in England.'" (One wonders if his host thought, "and we never have manners in England!")

"Another difference was this. It has always been a question whether it is proper to take a chicken bone, for example, in one's hand. In America we were generally taught not to do so, but I find these nice ladies do, in a delicate and fine manner, after the larger part of the meat has been cut off—but not with the little finger curled, as I have seen some would-be fastidious women do while holding a teacup or a bit of toast." (One sees to this day old women of the working class carefully crook the little finger when drinking tea.) "I do not see why the English custom is not right. The meat next to the bone is the sweetest and the custom seems rational, though I should think it would still further necessitate the use of napkins. (On later visits in England I found napkins in use at lunch. At a lunch in April 1913, with the Duke of Argyll and Princess Louise, at Kensington Palace, the napkins were very large ones, larger than we usually have at dinners.)"

In a private letter mention is made of an old lady well known in the north of England who always gnawed her chicken bones, tiny d'oyleys being placed in readiness by her plate, by the help of which she held the bone without greasing her fingers; and in this same letter the writer says, "as children we were allowed to gnaw our chicken bones because, according to our nurse, Queen Victoria did it, and 'what's good enough for the

Queen's good enough for you, my dears,' while I was brought up to believe that one of the Queen's youthful descendants, when lunching with his august relative, and on seeing her take a chicken bone in her fingers, airily remarked, ' Oh ! Grannie—Piggy-Wiggy ! ' "

But to return to Mr. Dana. Another small matter that differed from American custom, he notes, was the place of the clean knives and forks at the plates.

" We usually place the fork at the left and the knife at right angles to it at the top. Here they put the knife on the right side of the plate, parallel to the fork (as we have since come to do in the ' States '), and when I inadvertently changed it to the American way, out of habit, one of the waiters [1] immediately took the knife and put it back. He was not going to tolerate any such outlandish custom in a great English house.

" I may say, as to the dinners, you are usually asked for eight or even as late as half-past, and you are always expected to be punctually late to the extent of exactly a quarter of an hour ; that is, if you are asked to dine at eight, it means that you are expected at the door at a quarter-past, and if for half-past eight, at a quarter to nine. The usual breakfast hour for professional men is nine o'clock, lunch at two, tea at five, and dinner at eight or half-past. For those of leisure the only difference is in the breakfast hour, which is a little later, say nine-thirty or ten."

Here Mr. Dana is wrong : professional men generally breakfasted at 8 or 8.30, lunched at 1 or 1.30 and dined

[1] Footmen.

at 7.30 or 7.45 at that date; unless by professional men he means those at the very tip-top of their professions.

Mr. Dana mentions that in the House of Commons members wear their tall silk hats except when addressing the House. They did not wear gloves as they did when his great-uncle, Edmund Dana, was present about 1801. To-day the wife of a Cabinet Minister says that her husband never wears a morning coat and tall hat in the House of Lords unless he is going to speak: a blue serge suit is considered quite the right thing.

Apropos of this mention of the House of Commons, it is interesting to read that some fifty years before the time of which Mr. Dana writes, Princess Lieven [1] describes how she went to hear one of Canning's speeches (that famous one in which he announced that where the English Standard is planted foreign dominion shall not come). Princess Lieven listened to the speech locked up in a small hole nicknamed the "ventilator." There was no Ladies' Gallery in those days (1826), and for some time Canning's secretary forgot to release the poor lady, who was dining out and who eventually hurried away declaring that she would be late for her dinner-party, and that her husband would beat her—which seemed unlikely, for he seems to have been a very accommodating husband. But to return to the seventies.

When on a visit to Althorp House, the seat of the Earl and Countess Spencer, the young American says he arrived about four o'clock:

"The house is so well proportioned that one does not

[1] The unpublished Diary and Political Sketches of Princess Lieven, together with some of her Letters, edited with elucidations by Harold Temperley.

take in at first glance from the outside its great size, with its magnificent ballroom, its long picture galleries, spacious libraries, and broad, grand stairs. At the door I was met by the butler, who, when I gave my name, said he was awaiting me, and ordered my ' luggage ' to be carried up. I was to have the ' Mignard ' room.

" The butler said that Lord and Lady Spencer were out on the cricket ground and that ' His Lordship ' had left word for me to come there if I liked. I was put in charge of a quiet young man-servant or valet, who showed me to my room, where soon my luggage was brought up and unstrapped, hot water appeared, and I was asked if I wished anything else. I washed and got ready—but what clothes should I wear ? I had on a rough Scottish suit of mixed colour, while in my trunk I had nicer clothes that I had worn in town. I had never heard what was worn in the country, but I concluded to wear what I thought was the most sensible thing, and, at all events, to avoid being over-dressed. So I kept on my rough things, put on my thick shoes, and donned my cloth hat. On coming downstairs I met Lord Charles Bruce, Lord Spencer's brother-in-law, and to my satisfaction he had on clothes very much like my own in general appearance and cut, and he had also a soft cloth hat. He took me out to the cricket ground, a beautiful level, grassy spot of oval shape, with fine old trees on the margin, containing about eight acres or more of well-rolled turf.

" On going to my room to get ready for dinner I found that my luggage had all been unpacked, and my things neatly put away, well and conveniently arranged in drawers, on the dressing-table or the washstand. I

A RIDING HABIT IN 1889

*(From "The Queen")*

found laid out my dress suit, a clean shirt, white tie, handkerchief, my evening shoes, and black silk stockings. Hot water was at hand, and on the writing-table were paper, pens, ink, wax, and a card of the departure and arrival of mails. . . . On coming down to dinner I found the curtains all drawn and candles lighted, though at eight o'clock, the hour for dinner, it was still plain daylight with sun shining brightly out of doors. The waiters [1] were dressed in a quiet sort of livery; their hair was not powdered.

"The conversation during dinner and in the evening was light and agreeable and such as to put a stranger perfectly at his ease. They did not talk, as people so often do before strangers, about their personal friends, speaking of 'Will' and 'John' and 'Susan' and 'Jane,' or using nick-names, which would mean nothing to the stranger, but if they did speak of friends at all, they spoke in such a way that I was able to understand to whom they referred. Consideration and good manners here are second nature, not forced or laid aside on familiarity; nor is there anything formal or unnatural. All retired about eleven o'clock. Breakfast is when we like in the morning. . . .

"As we retired, candles were handed to us and we said good-night on the broad hall stairs. In my room I found my clothes that I had worn during the day taken away and my night things laid out for me, and the shutters fastened to, the curtains drawn, and the window closed. It is so strange that in this country of fresh air they so universally close the windows at night. . . . By the way, what we call window 'shades,' they call 'blinds';

[1] Footmen.

though we use the term Venetian ' blinds ' in the English sense; what we call ' blinds,' which in England are only on the inside and are without slats, they call ' shutters.'

" Next day I was awake," records this young American, at " eight and three-quarters, or a quarter ' to ' nine, as they say, instead of our quarter ' of ' nine. The young valet, the same who always waits on me, brought my clothes all brushed and folded, and shoes I had worn the day before, blacked. He drew the curtains fully aside, spread open the shutters, brought in hot water, prepared a large cold bath in a movable bath-tub,—for there are no bathrooms with set tubs in the house—put my washstand in order, folded up the towels that were sufficiently clean, and put out some fresh ones, laid out a clean shirt and collar and took away my things worn the evening before."

When visiting the Duke of Argyll at Inverary Castle there was no carriage from the castle to meet Mr. Dana.

" The footman at the door, dressed in Highland costume, did not know that I was expected. I was sure the Duchess specified the first fortnight in September for my visit and that I had replied I would come on September first. I took her letter out to make sure and then sent in my card. I had not mentioned the hour of arrival, as there was no exact schedule for the coaches. The servant came back saying it was all right, and the Duchess immediately met me at the door with a word of welcome, saying that she had been looking for me.

" I was shown to the drawing-room, where soon the Duke appeared. It is very cordial and pleasant to find

the head of the house ready to meet one, but it is really more convenient to be met by servants and shown to one's room first, as was done at Althorp, and I am told is usually the custom; especially convenient after my long walks on muddy roads. . . . I saw Princess Louise for a moment. She is, of course, a Royal Princess, daughter of Queen Victoria."

On their return from shooting, a bagpipe was heard playing outside, and the Duchess said that this was their way of announcing that it was time to dress for dinner. Mr. Dana found it was very short notice; dinner was at 8.30 and he was late.

"At breakfast the servants disappeared after putting the food on the sideboard and we helped ourselves or waited on one another. The ladies seemed to expect to wait on themselves, even the Princess, to whom all the ladies curtsey, when she first appears and again when she retires at night. They start from their seats towards the side-table, but of course accept assistance from one with grace, but rather as a bit of Henry Esmond gallantry than as really necessary. It was all so very simple and informal. The talk at breakfast was cheery and pleasant; after breakfast I read the *Times* and wrote letters. About 11.30 I came down and, meeting the Princess, asked her what it was usual to do on so rainy a day, and with that she proposed that I try fishing, for it was far too wet for the grouse shooting."

Talking to an elderly man about the customs of his youth, he spoke of the change which has come about in the matter of bathrooms. "When I was a young man

visiting about in the seventies, bathrooms were rarities, though baths were not. I remember coming home and telling my mother that the ——'s did everything awfully well—they had a bathroom!"

Glimpses of social life are obtained from the following extracts taken from some letters written by a young girl who visited much between 1890 and 1900:

"I arrived safely. Don't tell Mamma, but I travelled third class until the junction and then changed into a first, arriving with dignity and a clean pair of gloves. Several other people came by the same train, and the brougham, a closed waggonette and an omnibus with handsome horses with horrid tight bearing reins met us. I am the only girl without a maid. I suppose my bell rings in the visiting maids' quarters, for when I went to dress I rang and rang and rang, and thought I should have in the end to go to bed instead of to dinner, pretending I was ill, because no one answered it and I couldn't fasten my dress. At last a housemaid, such a nice woman, came, and she has promised to come each evening. I sneaked in, feeling purple all over, just as every one had gone in to dinner. There is a large party and the state service was used, huge silver-gilt vases and baskets and silver-gilt plates, and the food rather cold in consequence. The knives and forks made horrid squeakings on these magnificent platters. The table was all strewn with begonia flowers—just their heads—no high vases, but the next night it was all silver, and silver vases and china plates and silver bowls done with roses. The head gardener, a Scotchman—very sandy

THE MILLINERY OF 1889

SEVERAL HATS AND A BONNET PREPARED FOR THE SEASON OF 1889 WHEN LADIES WORE MODIFIED CHIGNONS AND CURLED FRINGES

*(From "The Queen")*

and superior—does the flowers. There are crowds of servants, but I wonder who sees to the management of the house—or rather who doesn't see to it. My boots and shoes go to be cleaned but they never come back. Yesterday Lady —— wished me to drive with her, and I ran up to dress, to find I hadn't a pair of outdoor shoes left, so again I rang and rang and rang and no one came. What was I to do—go down in my thin slippers and say nothing, or explain that I was late because I had no boots or shoes? I dashed out, found the back stairs, ran up and down, got quite lost, and at last found a footman in his shirt-sleeves who took pity on my plight, and eventually my nice housemaid arrived with all my missing footwear. Of course I apologized humbly, but you can imagine Lady ——'s stern manner hadn't become any less stern. I suppose I have gained a reputation for being a tiresome unpunctual girl. The truth is, my dear, that poor, maidless young women shouldn't go a-visiting the great in their palaces."

On another occasion: "Here I am at ——, all very grand. Brocade and gilding and stacks of flowers so well grown that they look quite bloated. The most lovely embroidered linen you ever saw—or didn't see. Everybody is very gorgeous: all over pearls and diamonds: also very gossipy, even a little catty. There are eighteen of us and only two girls. Rather dull, because the married women keep to themselves and the men like them much better than they like us; I suppose because they can't be expected to marry them. There was a big shoot yesterday, all of us very tweedy and thick booty, and we lunched in a barn near one of the farms. Such a set out: tables and folding chairs and flowers and

fruit, liqueurs and coffee and all sorts of drinks. There were hot dishes too—hot-pot and beefsteak pudding and lots of cold things and puddings and cake. Very different from Uncle ——'s sandwich and plum-cake shoots. We danced in the evening. Some other people came, but everybody was rather cliquey. The night before every one played Bridge [1] except old Colonel —— and myself. I read and he snored. They play high, so perhaps it was as well I can't play. But I think I shall have to learn. It's rather tiresome being a girl in a party like this, because so often they stop talking about what they *were* talking about if they think you are listening. We have the most lovely food : early morning tea at eight, and breakfast goes on from nine to ten, and you help yourself. The important ladies have it in bed. Lunch is at 1.30 ; tea with sandwiches and cakes and fruit galore at five and dinner at eight. A footman to every square yard and the most heavenly ices. If Mummy wants to know about the dinners, last night we had clear soup with custard shapes, sole all dressed up with lobster sauce, a mousse of ham with a sauce with cherries in it, roast lamb and all kinds of vegetables, partridges, an ice which was made to look like a melon, and a mushroom savoury, and, of course, lots of wines and always champagne. Sir James ——, who is Lady ——'s husband, is a horrid old thing with dyed hair and makes love to me, and I think Lord —— would too if he wasn't so frightened of Lady ——. Really, Agnes, they all

[1] Bridge was first played in this country about 1890 and retains its popularity to this day. A feature of social life is the well-attended Bridge Clubs, which have come into being and which are chiefly patronized by women.

seem too rich to be true, and everything is so fat—Lady ——, her pug, the grapes, the dahlias, the diamonds and even the butler. I can't think why they asked *me*, because, although we have lots of grandpapas and they have none, that doesn't matter much nowadays, does it ? "

In the lesser country-houses, the houses of old county families and of the newly-rich of the Napoleonic wars, who had by that time become landowners, life changed little between 1840, when the Victorian influence was beginning to be felt, and the nineties. Except that meals became less gargantuan, that dinner was served at 7.30 to eight o'clock instead of at six or seven, that gentlemen no longer drank so freely, that the " cold collation " developed into the family luncheon and children's dinner, and that afternoon tea became a regular feature, country-house life remained much the same until the introduction and general use of cheap and quick transport. Penny postage, parcel post, the telegraph and telephone, bathrooms, and electric light added to its luxury.

Up to the end of the eighties breakfast in such houses was generally served at nine—a substantial meal. In the eighteen-thirties and forties, when there were large house-parties, it might be as late as ten o'clock, and the party met in the drawing-room and the gentlemen armed the ladies into the dining-room as at dinner. Later the " cold collation," which was more patronized by the ladies than the gentlemen, became " luncheon " and took place at 1, 1.15 or 1.30 o'clock, and consisted of meat, vegetables, puddings, cheese, biscuits, butter, cake and fruit. Coffee was seldom served after luncheon

until the nineties, and liqueurs at that meal were almost unknown. Tea was at 4.30 and dinner at 7.30 or 7.45, coffee to follow, and in old-fashioned houses tea as well; whisky, soda-water and lemonade were put in the hall together with the bedroom candles about 10 or 10.30. The men of the party lighted the bedroom candles for the ladies, who then went to their rooms, the men retiring to the billiard-room or gun-room. Smoking in any room but that set apart for the purpose did not become general until the reign of King Edward, when manners became decidedly less formal and a few women began to smoke—a proceeding which was considered very shocking.

Prior to 1860 or thereabouts "the gentlemen" smoked out of doors or in the saddle-room. At night in small houses they retired to the kitchen or to the servants' hall, and in larger houses to the gun-room and billiard-room, though these were not part of the average Victorian house.

We have here a description of the service premises of a country house typical of its day:

"The back premises of C—— Hall were large, including a high-ceilinged kitchen, pantry with plate safe, servants' hall with long table and forms and little else, housekeeper's room—a cosy homely apartment with cupboards, easy-chairs, a centre table covered by a red and blue checked cloth, and a side table at which stout, black silk-clad Mrs. Dash did her accounts, a purring cat, a work-basket and a footstool—next to this the still-room with zinc-lined sink, cupboards and shelves. Here the early morning tea-trays were arranged, the bread-and-butter cut, the toast, scones, cakes, jams and pre-

serves made. The still-room maids washed up all the best china and set out the dessert. Upstairs was the housemaids' sitting-room, where they sewed, also the work-room for the ladies'-maid. From the kitchen opened the scullery (in which was the brick oven for bread baking), and vegetable room. Opening out of the wide passage were lamp-room, brushing and boot room, fruit-room, store-room; the meat larder with its heavy steps by which the butcher mounted to hang up the carcases of home-killed meat, a weighing machine, and on the shelves the great pickling jars; the game larder and the larder.

"In the meat larder stood a refrigerator, only opened once a day, so that the kitchen people were obliged to bethink them in good time of the required meat. The ice was obtained from the ice pit stocked each winter. The ice was stored in sawdust. Town-bought ice only became available when fast transport and increased railway service brought the country into closer touch with the town. Under cover were the wood and coal stores, from which a trolley ran on rails into the hall outside the kitchen door. Household accounts show that in winter-time on an average one ton of coal per day was burned. In the roof of the back hall was the bell which called the staff to meals, the advent of dining-room meals being heralded by the booming of a great gong. Apart from the house stood the dairy, the laundry and the pump-room.

"In the great brick-floored, sky-lighted kitchen—rebuilt in 1763 and slightly modernized from time to time—hung the black and gold lacquer-cased clock, which cost £12 and was put up when the house was built

in 1674. Down the centre of the room ran a long and massive wooden table. Across the top end were placed the range with open fire for roasting, ovens for meat and pastry, hot plates and boilers. Against the wall were the roasting jack wound by a key and assisted by a fan placed in the chimney, and turned by the ascent of the hot air, the great spits which held half a sheep or a huge joint of beef, the smaller spits for poultry and game, and the Dutch oven used in most households until the closed kitchen range made its appearance, and meat was baked in the oven rather than roasted before an open fire.

"Here stood the chopping-block, for cooks jointed and divided the meat in those days, the high stand from which was suspended the jelly-bag, the great sugar-nippers, the pestles and mortars in which sugar and almonds were pounded, the coffee-grinder, the pot and pan racks on which were ranged the gleaming copper utensils beloved of the cook and detested by the scullery-maid whose task it was to clean and polish them."

Sugar, up to about forty years ago, came from the grocers' in cones wrapped in blue paper and was cut up with nippers, and pounded in the mortar when sifted sugar was desired. Even in the fifties tea and sugar, by reason of their cost, were treated with respect and locked up safely in store-room and tea-poy—those attractive boxes made to contain tea-caddy and sugar-basin—while the food was obtained to a great extent from the home farm, the poultry yard and garden. Coal was cheap, and well it might be, for, in the kitchen of C—— Hall, to heat water, one oven and one hot plate, eleven huge scuttlefuls of coal were used each day. Little wonder

that C—— Hall has now suffered the fate of many another hall, its owners living in a few of the rooms with a reduced staff and the still-room fitted with a small modern range to serve as kitchen.

Before the coming of the motor-car the visiting radius of a family was confined to the number of miles a horse could come and go in the day, for although trains had brought towns nearer together, the country dweller might be separated from the station by several miles. To a mechanical carriage eight miles is as nothing, twenty-five miles merely a pleasant little drive. The car developed the week-end habit and the country cottage habit. It made people independent of their near neighbours, and while it enlivened the lives of the well-to-do it spoiled county society for the less well circumstanced. Country people went often to town, town people came often to the country. Town ways were adopted in the country, and, as many of the men guests were free only from Saturday to Monday, Sunday became a day of enjoyment rather than of church-going and Sunday-school teaching, varied by a visit to the stables and a walk. Life became more and more luxurious and gay. Changes were taking place in town life too.

Up to the middle of the last century, from a social point of view " birth " counted for everything, but from the eighties onwards—in London at all events—the spirit of ultra exclusiveness began to be relaxed, and when once the inch had been given it was not long before the ell was taken. The " American Invasion," as the entry of Americans into English society was termed, had its effect, and so too did the coming of the African millionaire. During the reign of King Edward VII social life

became less and less conventional. (Was it not the Edwardian beauty, Lady Warwick, who said that the Queen and the Prince Consort made Society respectable, while King Edward made it " smart " ?) People wanted to make money and to be amused. They would no longer submit to restrictions which hampered the fulfilment of these desires. Conversation became freer, the sex novel made its appearance, Society ventured into Bohemia, Bohemia returned the call, women—or at all events some women—demanded direct parliamentary representation,[1] the doings of the militant suffragettes were a universal subject of conversation,[2] conventional religion began to fail in its hold, the young girl " revolted," and women began to adopt the club habit and the latch-key habit.

The servant problem and the housing shortage are responsible for the great increase in the number of clubs. Many women live at a club or sleep out and use the club by day. In a community house—for that is what a club is—they may enjoy comforts and luxuries which otherwise they could not afford: spacious well-furnished rooms, a library, well-served—but not too often well-cooked—food. Now that there is such a shortage of domestic servants, and so great a proportion of those there are none too efficient, much entertaining is done at

[1] *Memories of a Militant*, by Annie Kenney.

[2] Looking back to those days, it is sad to recall how women were nsulted and tortured because they desired to become citizens, to be classed no longer with infants and imbeciles. To-day, that a woman shall record her parliamentary vote is accepted as a matter of course, though it still appears to be thought that the opinion of a boy of twenty-one must be of greater value than that of any women under the age of thirty. During the last debate on Votes for Women in the House of Lords they were frequently referred to as " irresponsible persons."

SO "ADVANCED." MISS FAITHFUL'S PRESS FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF LADIES ("*The Queen*," DECEMBER, 1862.) IN 1861 IT WAS UNUSUAL FOR LADIES TO WORK FOR MONEY. THE SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT HAD SCARCELY BEGUN. IT WAS NOT UNTIL 1918 THAT WOMEN CEASED TO BE CLASSED WITH "INFANTS AND IMBECILES" AND THOSE OVER 30 WERE GRANTED THE VOTE. AT THE LAST DEBATE ON THIS SUBJECT IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS WOMEN WERE REFERRED TO AS "IRRESPONSIBLE PERSONS"

clubs. Club and key are merely trouble-savers and are now denuded of the slightest suggestion of impropriety which was attached to them at first. A century which has seen the dethronement of many kings and queens has also seen the downfall of Mrs. Grundy. That once all-powerful person is little thought of nowadays. Crinolined or bustled, with her tightly corseted waist and her rigid conventions, she has had her day and made way for the latch-key lady.

And it is not only the middle-class woman who has become a latch-key lady. Nowadays women of the aristocracy are forced to live " anywhere," as people say, and the life of People of Importance is indeed shorn of much of its pomp and circumstance.

During the reign of King Edward dignified pomp and circumstance gave place to lavish luxury, and, as a certain outspoken great lady observed, after paying a week-end visit in a millionaire household, where the dinner-table was covered with white brocade, the heavily laced sheets threaded with pink ribbon and the marble floored bathrooms set out with great bowls and jars of powders and perfumes, " respectable women followed the fashions of harlots." Dress became more and more extravagant, the craze for bridge, poker, baccarat, betting and smoking spread. The bicycle helped young women to escape from the vicinity of the chaperon, and the motor made it possible to escape from everybody but oneself. " Week ending " became the fashion and every one played golf. Hotel managers began to bestir themselves to modernize their hotels and make them acceptable to a clientèle accustomed to luxury.

The restaurant habit grew, cocktail drinking came into

vogue, and what Society did, the rich middle class did also. The death of King Edward, the accession to the throne of King George and Queen Mary gave a momentary check to the mania for extravagance and pleasure which possessed the people. Then life whirled on again faster and faster, while death waited—his grim visage veiled. On August 4th, 1914, the veil was torn aside and the downfall of the Great Houses, already begun by the heavy taxation of land, was completed by the introduction of a crushing post-war income tax.[1]

To-day Dukes publish their accounts to show how impossible is the position of the great landowner. The Duke of Portland declares publicly that though he may keep up Welbeck on a lessened scale of expenditure it seems impossible that his heir can ever live there; Stowe Palace has become a public school. Many country houses are shut up, others partly shut up, and still others have become hotels, sanatoria, hydros, country clubs. In July 1920 the *Spectator* published two articles suggesting the use of derelict country houses as apartment houses with common rooms and a restaurant: the Press in general accords space to "Changing England," to the plight of the "Newly Poor." We have seen great changes in the social life of this country; do changes greater still await us?

[1] Pitt imposed an income tax as a war tax which was abolished a year after Waterloo. An income tax of 7*d.* in the £1, which was then supposed to be a temporary tax, was introduced in 1842. For a long time it was supposed that the income tax could be dropped, but that happy event has never come to pass. On the contrary, the cost of the Great War has necessitated an income tax of crushing severity.

# CHAPTER VII

## THE LIFE OF THE MIDDLE CLASSES

Sharp social distinctions—The happiest and the most respectable class——Jane Austen and Mrs. Gaskell picture middle-class family life—Genteel Mrs. Gibson—The Cranford ladies—A table of expenses from *The Cook's Oracle*—The adoration of rank—The cost of a confinement—An English family in 1851—How Mrs. Carlyle kept house—The House possessed of Seven Devils—Darwin's bad-hearted cat—Bugs and the consoling painter.

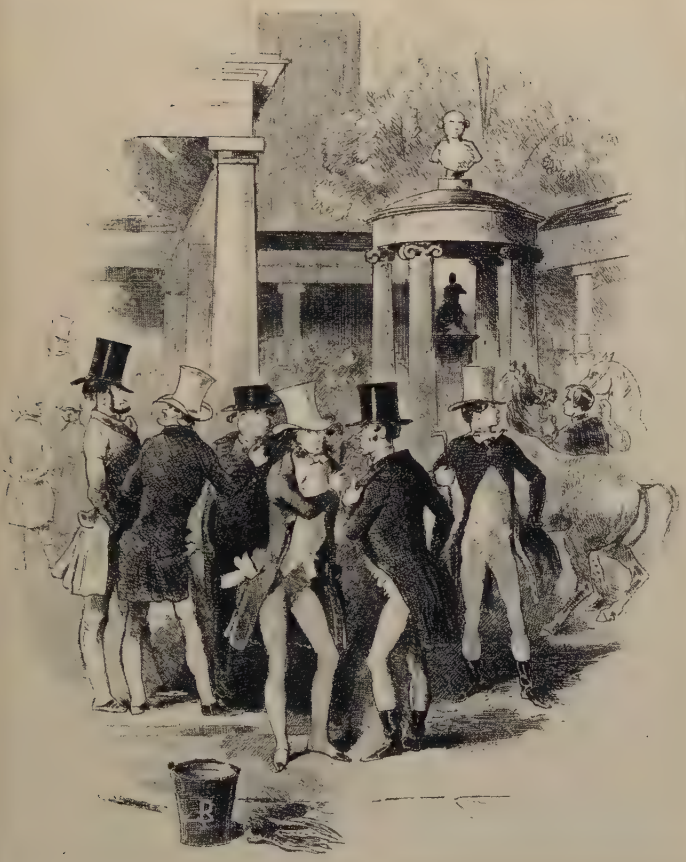
In the year 1820 there was a sharper social division between the aristocracy and the great county families and the upper middle classes than is now the case. The smaller gentry, professional people and merchants in the first two-thirds of the century had little opportunity of mixing with those socially above them, while they in their turn kept apart from the shopkeepers, farmers and so forth, as indeed they do to-day, for, although the upper middle class and the aristocracy have become more democratic, social distinctions are still severely adhered to in the lower middle class. During the early part of the nineteenth century gentlemen went into the Church, the Army and the Navy, they became barristers or accepted Government appointments; medicine and trade were not for them. If the clergyman of a country town or village was a gentleman by birth he was accepted in county society; if he was not, which was often the case, he was classed with the doctor, who held a higher position than

the apothecary (" It was[1] Mr. Lloyd, an apothecary sometimes called in by Mrs. Read when the servants were ailing; for herself and the children she employed a physician ") and the solicitor, persons of respectability to whom game was sent in the autumn, but who, in many large establishments, were entertained in the housekeeper's room, or in lesser houses, if a meal was served to them, it was served in the dining-room to them alone.

The manners and customs of upper middle class and middle class society are described in detail by Mrs. Gaskell, who, in *Wives and Daughters*, admirably depicts the establishment of a well-to-do country squire in 1825 or thereabouts. Molly Gibson, the doctor's daughter, is invited to stay with the Hamleys (though it is not supposed that she, as a doctor's daughter, is their social equal). Arriving on this visit, " Molly hurried to unpack her box, and arrange her few clothes in the pretty old-fashioned chest of drawers which was to serve her as dressing-table as well. All the furniture in the room was as old-fashioned and as well preserved as it could be. The chintz curtains were Indian calico of the last century —the colours almost washed out, but the stuff itself exquisitely clean. There was a little strip of bedside carpeting, but the wooden flooring, thus liberally displayed, was of finely-grained oak, so firmly joined, plank to plank, that no grain of dust could make its way into the interstices. There were none of the luxuries of modern days: no writing-table, or sofa, or pier-glass."

After the evening spent in conversation and cribbage, " the butler came in with a solemn look, placed a large Prayer-book before his master, who huddled the cards

[1] *Jane Eyre*, by Charlotte Brontë.



AT TATTERSALL'S

TATTERSALL'S WAS AS FAVOURITE A MEETING PLACE IN THE EARLY PART OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY AS IT IS TO DAY

*(From "D'Horsay; or The Follies of the Day" by A Man of Fashion)*

away in a hurry, as if caught in an incongruous employment; and then the maids and men trooped in to prayers."

It is mentioned that the library was so unfrequented that the housemaids often neglected to open the window shutters, "Indeed it was a tradition in the servants' hall that in the late Squire's time the library windows had been boarded up to avoid paying the window tax." [1]

The domestic arrangements in the household of that respected well-to-do doctor, Molly's father, are of a much simpler order. As a successful surgeon Mr. Gibson takes pupils, and it is because of the difficulty of chaperoning a motherless girl, and of the constant domestic jars which occur, that he marries the pretty, elegant, silly, affected Clare Kirkpatrick, ex-governess and widow of a curate.

Mrs. Kirkpatrick evidently was treated very kindly by the Cumnor family, but in other households then and later the position of the governess seems to have been anything but pleasant. These poor ladies were snubbed by their employers, despised by the servants and bullied by their pupils, unless indeed they were women of more force of character than was often the case

[1] This was first levied in England in the year 1697 for the purpose of defraying the expenses of making up the deficiency arising from clipped and defaced coin in the recoinage of silver during the reign of William III. It was an assessed tax on the window value of the houses, levied according to the number of windows and openings of houses having more than six windows and worth more than £5 per annum. Owing to the method of assessment the tax fell with peculiar hardship on the middle classes, and to this day traces of the endeavour to lighten its burden may be seen in numerous bricked-up windows. Strong agitation in favour of the repeal of the tax was made during the winter of 1850–1851, and it was accordingly repealed on July 24th, 1851.

when they entered the teaching profession merely because there were so few other ways in which a genteel young person could earn a living. Charlotte Brontë draws an exaggerated picture of Jane Eyre's life as governess to Adèle, the illegitimate child of Mr. Rochester, and Thackeray a scarcely less exaggerated one of Becky Sharp's experience as governess to the Misses Crawley.

Prior to his second marriage, Mr. Gibson keeps three servants: Betty, the old nurse, a cook and a girl who is supposed to be a housemaid, but who was under both the other two and "had a pretty life of it in consequence," a fate not unknown to the "Tweeny" of to-day. Mr. Gibson's tastes are simple, he is content to dine early, but with the departure of the pupils and the coming of the new Mrs. Gibson, who apes the customs of a class above her, considerable changes are made.

Mr. Gibson's bedroom was refurnished before his second marriage with "a grand toilette-table with a glass upon it." Miss Browning, an old family friend who helps with this task, describes how "Cromer, the upholsterer, wanted to persuade me to have a sofa and a writing-table. These men will say anything is the fashion, if they want to sell an article. I said, 'No, no, Cromer; bedrooms are for sleeping in, and sitting-rooms are for sitting in. Keep everything to its right purpose, and don't try to delude me into nonsense. Why, my mother would have given us a fine scolding if she had ever caught us in our bedrooms in the daytime. We kept our outdoor things in a closet downstairs; and there was a very tidy place for washing our hands, which is as much as one wants in the day-time. Stuffing up a bedroom with sofa, and tables! I never heard of such a thing!'"

When Mrs. Gibson returned as a bride there was " new paint, new paper, new colours: grim servants dressed in their best and objecting to every change, from their master's marriage to the oil-cloth in the hall which tripped 'em up, threw 'em down, was cold to the feet and smelt just abominable."

Disliking the trouble of late dinners, and being a Methodist, the cook leaves, objecting on religious grounds to trying any of Mrs. Gibson's new recipes for French dishes. " If she was to be set to cook heathen dishes after the fashion of the Papists she would sooner give it up altogether." Mr. Gibson had to satisfy his healthy appetite with badly made omelettes, rissoles, vol-au-vents, croquettes and timbales, " never being exactly sure what he was eating."

The Miss Brownings, spinster ladies of small income living in the little town, have Molly to stay with them. Her bedroom is " as clean and neat as a bedroom could be, with draperies of small delicate patch-work—bed-curtains, window-curtains, and counterpane; a japanned toilette-table, full of little boxes, with a small looking-glass affixed to it, that distorted every face that was so unwise as to look in it."

To amuse their guest the Miss Brownings give a party, which is much like those which were given at a rather later date at Cranford.[1] There Miss Jenkyns liked to adhere to the forms which were observed at meal-times in " my father, the rector's house. Accordingly we had always wine and dessert; but the decanters were only filled when there was a party and what remained was seldom touched, though we had two wine-glasses apiece

[1] *Cranford*, by Mrs. Gaskell, 1826–1840.

every day after dinner until the next festive occasion arrived, when the state of the wine was examined into in a family council. The dregs were often given to the poor; but occasionally, when a good deal had been left over at the last party (five months ago it might be), it was added to some of a fresh bottle brought up from the cellar. Then as to our dessert, Miss Jenkyns used to gather currants and gooseberries for it herself. . . . We felt very genteel with our two glasses apiece, a dish of gooseberries at the top, of currants and gooseberries at the sides and two decanters at the bottom." No wonder the Cranford ladies living on their minute incomes had to practise "elegant economy," for the cost of living was then little less than it is now.

The following table of expenses is given in *The Cook's Oracle* [1] for a family of three in the parlour, two maids and a man, allowance being made for a dinner-party once a month.

| | £ |
|---|---|
| Meat | 65 |
| Fish and poultry | 25 |
| Bread | 18 |
| Butter and cheese | 25 |
| Milk | 7 |
| Vegetables and fruit | 20 |
| Tea, coffee, sugar | 15 |
| Table ale | 25 |
| Washing | 20 |
| Coals | 30 |
| Candles and soap | 20 |
| Sundries and forgets | 50 |
| | £320 |

Deducting coals, washing and table ale—£75—that

[1] *The Cook's Oracle*, 1821–1822.

leaves £245, which is practically £4 15*s.* a week, or roughly 16*s.* per head for food and cleaning materials in a household "where there is plenty of good provisions, but no affectation of profusion."

Such living in 1913 might have cost 12*s.* a head, while in 1920 £1 per head per week might cover the cost. One must remember, however, that dinner-parties in 1822 were costly affairs, for each of the two or three courses consisted of a vast number of dishes. How thankful we housekeepers of to-day would be if we paid the prices paid by the late Mrs. Ward [1] in 1851—the year of the Great Exhibition. "Food," she says, "was very cheap, beef and mutton only 7½*d.* and 8½*d.* a pound, butter 1*s.* 2*d.*, and oysters, the best natives, only 7*d.* a dozen."

A delicious sketch of middle-class life is *A Day in the Life of an Ingleez Family* [2] by a Frank Interpreter at the Great Exhibition.

The Interpreter explains that it is the beginning of the day. A table is set out, covered with a snowy damask cloth, with urns and vases of silver for tea, cups of porcelain, one for each of the family, bits of toasted bread, hot cakes, meat, honey, and butter. This meal the Ingleez of distinction take in common.

"Mr. Brown rises at eight. He shaves. He meets his family: kisses them: but rarely speaks, except to swear a little, and find fault. He reads through *El Tims*. He gives money to his wife. . . . He goes to the City. His young son comes in late suffering from hot coppers. His daughters come in, pale and heavy-

[1] *Memories of Ninety Years*, by Mrs. E. M. Ward.
[2] *A Day in the Life of an Ingleez Family*, 1851, Thackeray.

eyed, having been to some confounded balls.[1] The men pass the day in offices and counting-houses, the women in shops, in carriages, visiting one another, receiving company at home."

One may reconstruct the life of the Brown family in the roomy house of dismal exterior situated perhaps in Mecklenburgh Square: the dining-room with its massive mahogany sideboard on which stand the knife-boxes and the heavily chased salver presented by Messrs. Dash, Dash and Hyphen on the occasion of Mr. Brown's marriage, and underneath it, on the turkey carpet, the great mahogany wine-cooler: a vast mahogany table, twenty-four mahogany chairs, crimson rep curtains. Upstairs in the double drawing-room the tall pier-glasses, the grate of shining steel and brass, the emerald-green curtains hanging from heavy gold cornices, the back to back ottoman, dachshund-legged chairs, the chiffonier and the bouquets of wax flowers in glass cases—the ladies in their full-skirted dresses[2] trimmed with "vandyked and scolloped flounces, flounces edged with lace and fringe, flounces plain or flounces headed with gimp or velvet."

From Thackeray we learn something of the cost of a confinement: Mrs. Stubbs, writing to a friend after her marriage, dwells on the sad expense which these dear babies occasion. "Fancy, Eliza, how much this Mary Malowney (nursemaid) costs us. Ten shillings every week; a glass of brandy or gin at dinner; three pint-bottles of Mr. Thrale's best porter every day—making

[1] At which they wore full-skirted dresses of tarlatan or crape profusely trimmed with lace, their short sleeves and one-button gloves revealing arms thin or plump as the case might be.

[2] *A History of English Dress*, by Georgiana Hill.

twenty-one in a week, and nine hundred and ninety in the eleven months she has been with us. Then, for baby, there is Doctor Bates's bill of forty-five guineas, two guineas for christening, twenty for a grand christening supper and ball . . . twenty guineas for flannels, laces, little gowns, caps, napkins, and such baby's ware: and all this out of three hundred a year."

To-day women of moderate means are beginning to go to Nursing Homes for their confinements, or rather the one or two confinements which the modern woman permits herself. It is becoming here, as in America, inconvenient to arrange such affairs at home owing to limited accommodation and service difficulties. But no matter if she be confined at home or in a Home, the maternity nurse is now Nurse So-and-So, starched, stiff, certificated, requiring neither brandy, gin nor porter, and when taking private cases in well-to-do houses asking a weekly payment of three to five guineas.

Carlyle and Jane,[1] his wife, add something to the domestic history of the century, "Tuesday, June 10th, 1834, it appears, was the date of our alighting, amid heaped furniture, in this house, where we were to continue to live for life," writes Carlyle, and goes on to say, "no such house, for beautiful thrift, quiet, spontaneous, nay, as it were, unconscious—minimum of money reconciled to human comfort and human dignity—have I anywhere looked upon where I have been," a statement with which it is not perhaps easy to agree, for Mrs. Carlyle seems to have been anything but a peaceful housekeeper.

[1] *Letters and Memorials of Jane Welsh Carlyle*, prepared for publication by Thomas Carlyle, published in 1883.

She speaks with admiration of the Scotch housekeeper in comparison with the English, and declares that "the English women turn up the whites of their eyes, and call on the good Heavens at the bare idea of enterprises which seem to me in the most ordinary course of human affairs. . . . To see how they live and waste here, it is a wonder the whole city does not 'bankrape, and go out o' sicht'; —flinging platefuls of what they are pleased to designate 'crusts' (that is what I consider all the best of the bread) into the ashpits. I often say, with honest self-congratulation, 'In Scotland we have no such things as 'crusts'."

She complains of some intimate friends who were always borrowing from her; they even borrowed her brass fenders one day. "Is it not a shame to manage so," she asks, "with eight guineas a week to keep house on? It makes me very indignant to see the waste that goes on around me, when I am needing so much care and calculation to make ends meet. When we dine out, to see as much money expended on a dessert of fruit (for no use but to give people colic) as would keep us in necessaries for two or three weeks!"

"My present maid," she mentions, "has a grand-uncle who gave £5 for a couple of pineapples, and here is his niece working all through the year for £8."

Mrs. Carlyle certainly did "manage." "I have made up my old black gown (which was dyed puce for me at Dumfries), . . . I shall get no other this winter. . . . I am now turning my pelisse. . . . The diameter of the fashionable ladies at present is about three yards; their bustles are the size of an ordinary sheep's fleece. The very servant-girls wear bustles. . . . A maid went out

A STUDIO IN THE SIXTIES

HOW ART WAS STUDIED AT SOUTH KENSINGTON IN THE SIXTIES

*(From "The Queen," 1861)*

one Sunday with three kitchen dusters pinned on as a substitute."

Having a great desire for a certain sofa, Jane bargains for it very cannily. She trades her old green curtains of which no use could be made, unless first dyed at the rate of 7*d*. a yard, for 30*s*., and buys the sofa for £1 extra, and proceeds to make up a spare mattress and pillows to fit it and to cover it.

Her description of having her house papered and painted and done up in 1852 might have been written by the unfortunate women who tried to achieve a like task in 1918 or 1919, when Labour was so scarce that workmen gave themselves almost unimaginable airs and graces. Mrs. Carlyle says of the tradesman who was supposed to carry out the job: " I have often said that I couldn't be at the trouble to hate any one; but now decidedly I hate one man—Mr. ——! His conduct has been perfectly shameful; not a promise kept, and not even an apology made for breaking them. I have ceased to write to him, to send any messages to him. I merely pray God to ' very particularly damn him.'

" Workmen come and go away, finishing nothing, paint something and then proceed to do other work which spoils the paint." " Three flittings," says Mrs. Carlyle, " they say, is equal to a fire; but a thorough repair is equal to three fires. Our house has for a fortnight back been possessed by seven devils! A painter, two carpenters, a paper-hanger, two nondescript apprentice-lads, and a spy, all playing the devil."

In the middle of the tumult of papering and painting and whitewashing, a certain Helen, whom Mrs. Carlyle describes as " the strangest mixture of philosopher and

perfect idiot that I have met with in my life," remarks "When one's doing this, one's doing nothing else anyhow!"

So much turmoil went on in the house at this time that the poor white cat disappeared. "I suppose she could not stand the muddle," says Mrs. Carlyle, and adds, "Darwin says if I can put up with a cat with a bad heart I may have his." We are left to wonder if the bad-hearted cat endured the muddle any better than his predecessor.

It was, perhaps, after this that Darwin wrote and suggested to Mrs. Carlyle that she looked as if she needed to go to Gunter's and have an ice. In those days to drive to Gunter's and eat ices was one of the fashionable ways of killing time, and rows of carriages would be drawn up in the shade of the trees of the gardens in Berkeley Square. Ladies sat in their carriages and the ices were brought to them.

It is strange to note that reference is continually made by Jane to bugs in the beds, both in her own and in that of the servant (who appears to have slept in the kitchen and kept her box in the back kitchen), in the beds of her friends and in those in lodgings where she slept. This is rather surprising when one considers the reputation for housekeeping of the Early Victorian ladies. When, in the middle of having the house done up, the maid finds 200 bugs in her bed, one of the painters consolingly remarks that he knows a house in Belgrave Square where they crawl about the floors.

The feeling that ladies must of necessity be incompetent, useless persons was as strong in 1847 as it was in 1914. A few months after war was declared ladies

became nurses, kitchen-maids, cooks, washers-up in canteens and hospitals, and later worked in munition factories and Government offices, thus showing that to be an incompetent silly was not a necessary part of the make-up of a lady. A certain housemaid in Mrs. Carlyle's service thought otherwise, for she "wondered where there was another lady that could stuff chair-cushions, and do anything that was needed and be a lady too!" The work that day was the restuffing of Henry Taylor's [1] famous chair which had generated hundred thousand millions of "small things." And while Jane restuffs chairs and deals with millions of small things, her husband Thomas, son of a Scotch stonemason, formerly usher in Scotch provincial schools, and a private tutor, safely removed from domestic turmoil in his Chelsea attic study, poured out on paper [2] "his fiery eloquence, his rugged pathos, his grim and caustic humour, his unrivalled talent for word portraiture and picturesque description." Here it was that his *French Revolution* was finished, to be published in 1837, and by which his place in English literature was permanently fixed.

[1] Author of *Philip Van Artevelde.*

[2] *Social England*, 1815–1885, by H. D. Traill, D.C.L., and J. S. Mann, M.A.

# CHAPTER VIII

## THE LIFE OF THE MIDDLE CLASSES (*continued*)

Anthony Trollope and the clergy—No gas, no hot water, complains Mrs. Proudie—Life in a vicarage in 1860—"Moons" and "Grapes"—Bonnets and pews—"Prayers are on the table, sir"—The bonnet and the box—The family life of a retired army officer in 1872 to 1900—Remember the poor—Quick transport—Cold storage—Foreign meat—Factory food—The cost of living.

Anthony Trollope introduces us to the houses of the clergy in the middle of the century.[1] When Archdeacon Grantly goes with Mr. Arabin to see the latter's living of St. Ewold's they discuss the size of the dining-room which is sixteen feet by fifteen feet, proportions which are considered quite impossible by the Archdeacon. The ex-warden, Mr. Harding, suggests that the room will do very well for a round table, to which the Archdeacon retorts, "A round dinner-table is the most abominable article of furniture that ever was invented. I hope that Arabin has more taste than to allow such a thing in his house," going on to observe that he, the Archdeacon,

"Had always been accustomed to a goodly board of decent length, comfortably elongating itself according to the number of the guests, nearly black with perpetual rubbing, and as bright as a mirror. Now round dinner-tables were generally of oak, or else of such new construction as not to have acquired the peculiar hue which

[1] *Barchester Towers.*

was so pleasing to him. He connected them with what he called the nasty new-fangled method of leaving a cloth on the table, as though to warn people that they were not to sit too long. In his eyes there was something democratic and parvenu in a round table. He imagined that dissenters and calico-printers chiefly used them, and perhaps a few literary lions more conspicuous for their wit than their gentility."

When Bishop Proudie takes possession of the palace at Barchester Mrs. Proudie complains,

" there is no gas through the house, none whatever, but in the kitchen and passages. Surely the palace should have been fitted through with pipes for gas, and hot water too. There is no hot water laid on anywhere above the ground-floor; surely there should be the means of getting hot water in the bedrooms without having it brought in jugs from the kitchen. . . . The bishop had a decided opinion that there should be pipes for hot water. Hot water was very essential for the comfort of the palace. It was, indeed, a requisite in any decent gentleman's house."

If this was so it was a requisite denied to many gentlemen until a far later date.

Evidently Mrs. Proudie introduced gas into the palace, for on the occasion of the first evening party which she gave there was a huge gas lamp with twelve burners hanging from the ceiling. People were to arrive at ten, supper was to last from twelve to one, and at 1.30 everybody was to have gone.

(Elsewhere it is mentioned that at such parties Marsala at 20*s*. a dozen did very well for the lower clergy.)

From 1850 onwards the living may take up the tale. The following letter describes the life of a country vicarage some sixty years ago :

" In 1847 we came to live in Hertfordshire when I was eleven years old. The vicarage was an attractive red-brick house, built by my father, who spent, I believe, far more than he could afford in extras not covered by the Church Grant. There was a park-like field, a small flower garden and excellent kitchen garden, stables and piggery. We kept poultry but not cows. The house contained a tiled entrance lobby and oak-floored hall, dining, drawing room and study, three best bedrooms and two dressing-rooms, two servants' rooms and two nurseries. These latter were in a wing approached by a swing door, and back stairs led down to the kitchen, pantry and a small parish room, which were approached from the hall by another baize-covered swing door, and woe betide those who left those doors open. There were no bathrooms then, and all hot and cold water had to be carried from the kitchen and scullery. But we all had baths each day in spite of that. Oil lamps and candles were used for lighting. Our drawing-room was papered with a buff and gilt Fleur-de-Lys patterned paper. There were book-shelves and pier-glasses and wool-work ottomans and an upright grand piano with faded red silk fluted across the front and a very fine harp. The harp was a popular instrument in my mother's youth. The carpet was red with a buff pattern, and my mother had a davenport (a small writing-table) sacred to her own use.

THE PASTIMES OF SOCIETY

SKATING, SLEIGHING AND YACHTING IN 1861

*(From "The Queen)*

In the best bedrooms there were four-post beds with drab damask curtains.

" I was the youngest of the family, and after the nurse left our household consisted of a cook, house-parlour-maid and a girl. Their wages were £18, £16 and £6. A quick clever widow woman who lived in a cottage near-by came in to bake and to help when required. She always wore her bonnet and clattered about the kitchen and scullery in pattens. The family then were my father and mother and myself and two brothers who came on visits, as did later various grandchildren. Our income then, I think, was about £800 a year. We kept an open carriage, called a Stanhope (which had seats for two in front, a hood and a seat for the groom behind), one horse and a groom-gardener, who also pumped and looked after the fowls and pigs. Extra help for the garden could be procured when necessary.

" Our meals consisted of nine o'clock breakfast, one o'clock luncheon and seven o'clock dinner. The walls of the dining-room were hung with a greyish buff paper. There were a Turkey carpet and mahogany furniture. The table-cloth was removed for dessert. We dined late on Sunday, for there was no evening church. The kitchen was brick-floored and had a closed range. There was a brick oven for bread in the washhouse. We had a number of visitors and we dined out at neighbouring houses, dinners being fixed when the moon was high. As a child (about 1850) I remember that these parties were called ' Moons ' and at some houses ' Grapes,' these being given at a time when the grapes were at their finest. Hot-house fruit was a treat to people who had

no green-houses, for one could not buy foreign fruit then. There were archery parties and in hay-time syllabub parties. Afternoon tea did not come in until later, but when visitors called cake and wine were offered. There were croquet and archery parties, and when tennis became fashionable I remember a local magnate playing tennis in a top-hat, but he, I dare say, was old-fashioned. There were balls, and the great houses—Hatfield and The Hoo—were very hospitable." (" Running up to town " and the " week-end " habit had not then spoiled country society.)

" My mother came of a rich Manchester family and my father had mixed with rich men at Oxford, where he drove four-in-hand and was so expert a whip that he won a wager by keeping the wheels of the coach along a line of halfpennies laid at intervals on the road. I visited a good deal amongst old friends, and I remember that most people of any means had men-servants, or at all events a page-boy. I also remember that the drawing-room of a house in which I used to stay was papered with one of those wonderful old Chinese papers which were put on in squares. I believe that it was then about seventy years old. There was a great fashion for Chinese lacquer and Chinese designs in the late seventeen-hundreds, and in the early eighteen-hundreds for Indian shawls and Indian silks brought home by officials of the John Company.[1] My eldest brother was in a John Company Regiment.

" When I was a young girl (in 1850) we visited in the village, taught in the Sunday School and trained the

[1] The East India Trading Company, incorporated during the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

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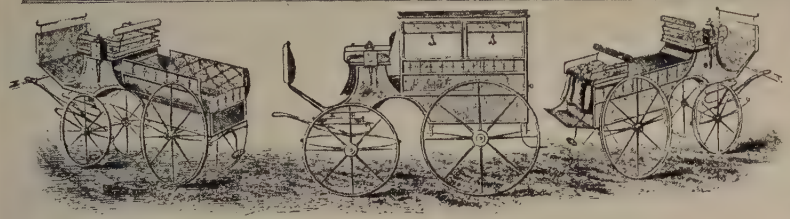

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CRINOLINES AND CARRIAGES. A PAGE OF MID-VICTORIAN ADVERTISMENTS

SUCH CARRIAGES ARE RARETIES NOWADAY AND THE PICTORIAL ADVERTISEMENT HAS VASTLY IPMROVED

(*From "The Queen"*)

choir. There was a Harvest Festival and a School Treat and Mothers' Meetings, but there were not the ceaseless services and guilds and to-do's that there seem to be now. The servants wore bonnets on Sundays and went to church and sat in their own pew, and came in to morning and evening prayers. There were boxed-in pews in those days where the quality sat in state. The men and women of the lesser order were separated, the men sitting on one side, the women on the other. The children were in charge of the Sunday School teachers and fidgeted and sniffed and shuffled their feet in spite of all efforts to keep them quiet. The women would carry a Prayer-book, a clean handkerchief and a posy of flowers. My nieces, when they visited us, taught in the Sunday School. Their classes were very popular because they illustrated their lessons with coloured chalks. Goliath was so large that he had to be continued on a second sheet of paper. When my father was old he went to sleep when reading prayers and my mother had to wake him, and then sometimes he began all over again, so that prayers were very long, or he skipped a page so that they were very short. The parlourmaid used to bring in the large Prayer-book on a salver and say, 'Prayers are on the table, sir.' It amused my brothers and they would not let my mother tell her not to do this.

"It was usual to have family prayers in those days. At one house where I stayed the parrot used to walk about while prayers were being read. He invariably turned his attention to the stout cook's ankles and chuckled obscenely when she endeavoured to kick him away. At last she refused to pray unless the parrot was confined to his cage. Well do I remember her white cotton

stockings and elastic-sided boots with their black tabs sticking out at the back.

" Two of my brothers were in the army. The eldest, as I have said, began his career in one of the John Company regiments. Tom, poor lad, was killed in the Mutiny—he was only eighteen. My youngest brother was in the Civil Service. My mother as an old lady wore a full-skirted dress, the bodice cut a little low and buttoned down the front. It had bell sleeves and lace under sleeves and chemisette. Her cap had lappets on either side and covered all but just the front of her parted hair. I am not sure if she was old-fashioned; certainly she did not trouble much about fashions then. I remember she told me that as a young girl she had a dress allowance of £100 a year and never could make it do. I was allowed £30 a year for my clothes and could not make *that* do. I, as a grown-up girl, wore a crinoline and a little jacket and a pork-pie hat. When we went to balls our admirers (if we had any) gave us bouquets, prim and round, bordered by a paper frill. We wore yards and yards of tarlatan and our shoulders came right out of our low-cut silk or satin bodices. My mother used to be fond of relating that the Lady Dacre of those times, passing a shop, saw a bonnet being packed into a box, and on inquiring if that bonnet could be packed into that small box, said she would buy it, utterly regardless of any other consideration. Old Mrs. Hale of Kingswaldenbury used to carry her diamonds about with her loose in her purse—one of those long silk purses then in fashion. Both of these ladies were neighbours. I remember when hats were re-introduced—brown straw mushroom hats—somewhere about 1856, I think, and they were con-

WHEN HATS FIRST RETURNED TO FASHION THEY WERE CONSIDERED "BOLD"

"AND IS THE SHORT SKIRT COMING?" ASKED THE FASHION EDITOR OF "THE QUEEN" IN 1863

THE "BOLD" HAT AND THE SHORT SKIRT

sidered curiosities that only a few daring spirits ventured to wear. Every one had worn bonnets for ages before that. You must excuse my reminiscences coming to you in these detachments, but my memory does not always work very rapidly, though it is quite good and strong for my years.

" P.S.—About wages: these were all found and beer was given or beer money. I think the Blue Ribbon Movement killed that, at all events as regards young girls, and money wages rose a little in consequence. They had no regular days out, but could go when they wanted, always being back before dark. They had no difficulty in finding husbands, and at one time three of our cooks were married and living in the village, so matrimonial projects did not suffer from the non-weekly ' day out.' "

In the day of the lady who gives this description of life in a country vicarage money went very much further than it does to-day, when £800 a year certainly would not permit a family to live in the way in which a retired officer and his family (a member of whom writes as follows) lived in 1872 to 1890.

" We lived on the borders of Wales, about one and a half miles from a small town. My parents had five children living—one a boy at a private school, another attending the local grammar school, prior to going on to Public Schools, and the three nursery children. I believe their income was then between £700 and £800 a year. Our house contained a dining-room and drawing-room, a good deal of passage and hall, two nurseries, and there must have been enough bedrooms for the family, the maids and a guest-room or two, for people often came to stay.

I remember striped chintz curtains in the drawing-room with kingfishers and pink flowers on them—very pretty. There was a piano and a guitar and plenty of flowers and books. Everything was a little faded. My mother had her own sofa (with a wool-work *couvre-pied* worked in a zigzag pattern in green, red and yellow), a walnut wood davenport and a walnut wood work-table with a red silk bag underneath.

" We had two nurses, a cook and a house-parlourmaid: an elderly spinster with a club foot, a chignon and ' follow me lad ' curl came from the village to sew, by the day, and the garden man's wife helped with the house work now and then. They charged 2*s.* 6*d.* and 1*s.* 6*d.* a day respectively and were given their food. Later we had one nurse and a governess walked from the town to give us lessons.

" There was a man-of-all-work who wore livery when he attended my mother, which was seldom, because either my father or one of us children generally drove with her, the man being needed at home to attend to the garden, pigs, poultry and the cow. The carriage was very low with two seats *vis-à-vis* and, behind, a little perch for a groom. The reins rested on a support and the pony was a very long way off. The driver must have been quite helpless had his steed decided to behave badly.

" I remember that an aunt gave me a fish-wife dress in white and scarlet and a straw hat turned up at the back which had red ribbon streamers. It came from Jolly's of Bath, and I wore it on high days and holidays for two years, the dress having been thriftily made with tucks to allow for increasing growth. That was when I was ten or eleven years old, I think—1878 or 1879.

" We children had all our meals, save our one o'clock dinner, in the nursery, and they were very plain. Porridge, bread and milk, bread fried in bacon fat, toast or bread and dripping, sometimes jam. Jam, however, was not used in the lavish way it is to-day." (Apropos of this, Mrs. Panton in *In Garret and Kitchen* says, " Jam was for high days and holidays. We had oranges at Christmas and perhaps on a few Sundays for dessert in the New Year. Marmalade we never saw; we had treacle, not its pale sister, golden syrup.")

" For tea, bread and butter, sometimes cake or jam, never both together. Dinner was our parents' lunch; hot or cold meat, vegetables, a pudding. Children were expected to eat what was given to them and to do as they were told then. No one troubled about mental repressions, because they had never heard of them—which does not prove that they did not exist and work incalculable harm. One day there was Pease Pudding, to my idea, then and since, a loathly compound. 'Eat your portion.' 'Please, I can't.' Threatenings of dire punishment, of the appearance of a horrid yellow mess at tea . . . at breakfast . . . nothing else until it was consumed. Obedience, and then such immediate and terrible consequences as made my parents feel that their efforts to rebuke fastidiousness had not been a success.

" The grown-up dinner was at seven o'clock. I think fashionable people dined later.

" My mother was a keen gardener and our garden was a pleasant place. I recall an avenue of Mary lilies taller than I, a duck-pond upon which we set to sea in washing tubs, a huge dog kennel with a steeply sloping zinc roof,

so hot on sunny days that it became a pleasure which was almost a pain to slide down it.

"We always had a Sunday dinner of roast beef, Yorkshire pudding, roasted potatoes, vegetables, and apple-tart in summer and plum-pudding—of a plain order—in winter, and on the side table a row of jam pots into which slices of beef and its accompaniments were put. A paper was then tied over each and they were removed to the kitchen, from whence old people or children fetched them for the refreshment of village invalids. My father—the son of a well-to-do clergyman—my mother—the daughter of a younger son of good family—had been reared in the best traditions of their day, amongst which was the duty of kindness to those less well off than themselves."

Mrs. Gladstone, I believe, followed the same custom. "Never did she seem to lose sight of the needs of others," Mrs. Drew wrote of her mother. "She could scarcely enjoy a mouthful of food without remembering some one—perhaps in the village, or Home of Rest, or Orphanage—less well supplied with worldly goods. 'Cut off a wing,' she would say to the long-suffering butler, 'and let it go hot to Miss R. *at once*.' On the mantelpiece in the hall was usually to be seen some tit-bit she had purloined from the luncheon-table on the chance of somebody going up to the village. 'Never go to bed at night,' she said to her children, 'without the feeling you have done some little act of kindness or selflessness.'"

"I have memories of a kindly *nouveau riche* peer who drove four-in-hand, and of the local grandee, the then Duke of Beaufort, with hooked nose and side whiskers, who did the same (Although I did not know it until long

after, he was the duke who returned home, gathered his grooms and his household servants together, to attend communion service because he was so distressed, 'Little Nelly,' one of his mistresses, having left him!)[1]; of a neighbouring squire with an erratic tandem; of my aunts' brougham, which was painted blue and upholstered in some kind of stone-coloured material, their old coachman in livery coat and striped waistcoat and tall hat with its cockade, who climbed up to his box like a weary old parrot; of hearing talk of archery parties, of croquet parties, of musical gatherings at the Herefordshire home of some well-known amateur musicians . . . also a dim feeling of insecurity . . . a semi-serious joke regarding the tax collector, whom I imagined to be a modern substitute of Fe Fo Fum; an overheard 'I'm afraid we shall have to give up the pony, my dear' . . . my mother's tears. . . .

"And then the move to Clifton—for education. A tall house with a basement, a tiny piece of dull garden back and front where my brothers kept rabbits, and to our horror Mamma rabbit eat her babies. 'Oh, Mummie,' asked our youngest sister, 'if they had looked at you when I was born would you have eaten me?!!!' My brothers in school caps . . . college boys. A household reduced to cook and house-parlour-maid, early dinner, high tea at six o'clock in order to save money and service. As I became older, knowledge of the constant planning, contriving and going without, which is the lot of people placed as my parents were placed who strive to educate five children well and to live in the society of their equals.

[1] *Lady Henry Somerset, a Memoir*, by Katherine Fitzpatrick.

"I have memories of my mother's district, of my father's Charity Organization work, of a certain blackly cold winter of distress during which my father and mother conducted a private soup kitchen. In order to save the hard-worked house-parlourmaid we girls opened the door and dispensed soup and bread, or cocoa and bread, to those who applied. One of the applicants was an enormous navvy, white and exhausted, deeply ashamed to ask charity. My father coming in at that moment talked with him and eventually, I believe, was able to help him substantially.

"My mother's health failed and I, being the one of the three sisters with any liking for domestic affairs, became at the age of thirteen assistant housekeeper. The cook was a fat jolly Devonshire woman whose wages were £22: the house-parlourmaid, a silent, morose, efficient woman of thirty, had £18: an imp of a knife and boot boy earned 2*s*. 6*d*. a week. How did I learn that once upon a time our parlourmaid had suffered shame—misery—had, it was said, crazed with trouble, strangled her new-born child? When I knew her she was an admirable servant, and kind, in her morose way, to us.

"To provide food and cleaning materials for the household of nine, to pay the boot boy and the washing, my mother had an allowance of £5 5*s*. per week. Oh, the struggle to make it do, the constant anxiety that, when the week's 'books' were set before him, more money would have to be demanded of my father.

"The introduction of quick steamships and cold storage enabled foreign meat to be brought into the English market, and excellent meat it was. The butchers scorned it—naturally—and told terrible tales

of its origin to the servants and frequently sold it as home-killed. The outcry against it became hysterical: our maids behaved as if they had been asked to eat rat poison, '*We* will eat it,' decreed my father, 'and give English meat to the servants.' In the end what was good enough for 'the Captain' became good enough for them.

"About this time factory prepared foods, soups and sauces came into greater use, jams, jellies, potted meats, tinned and bottled fruits, also labour-saving foods such as ready cut lump sugar and 'castor' sugar, stoned raisins, pounded almonds, prepared and chopped suet in packets, packet jellies, powdered gelatine (in my mother's day isinglass was used for jellies) and all sorts of patent cleansers. Fewer and fewer people baked at home, except in the north.

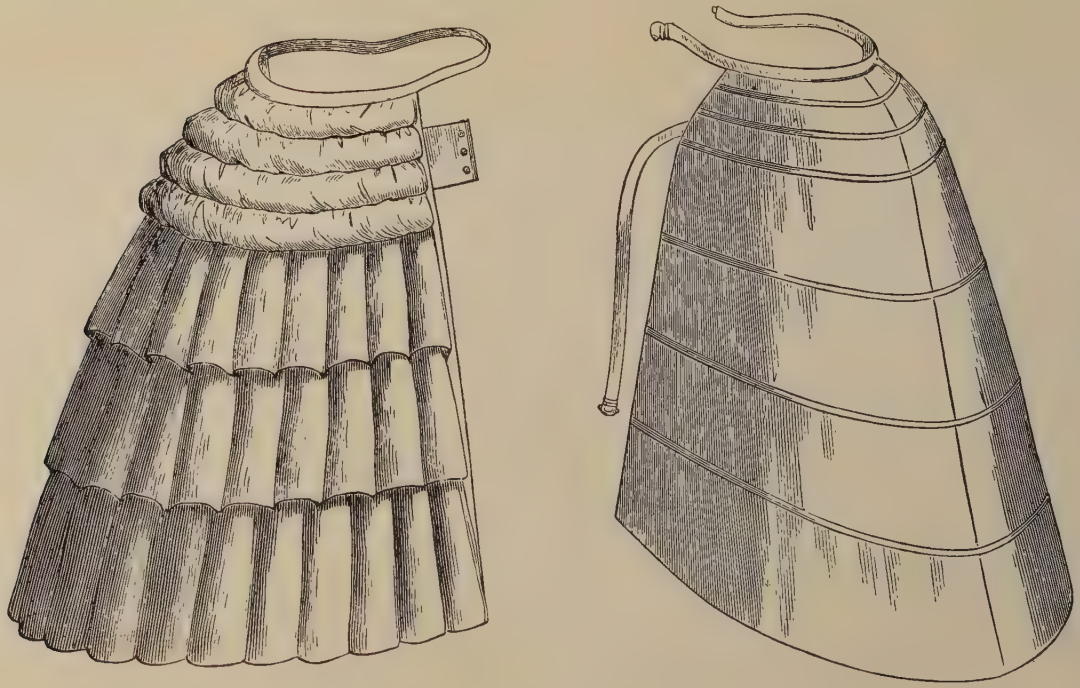
"It was, I think, after this date—1880 or thereabouts—that food gradually became cheaper until in the early nineties it was cheaper than it had been since the Napoleonic wars; peace, quick transport and cold storage being, I suppose, the reasons."

# CHAPTER IX

## THE LIFE OF THE MIDDLE CLASSES (*continued*)

A simpler standard—The bustle—In a well-to-do clergyman's house—Bloomers and breeches—Life in a small country house in 1880 and 1890—The store-room—The girl who got into trouble and the unmarried wife—Living in London in 1901 on £1500 a year—Middle-class life on £300 a year—On what incomes did they marry?—"As many little nursery-maids as one required"—Post-war incomes—Passing fashions in furniture and decoration—A domestic revolution—The labour-saving age.

"In my childhood," writes another correspondent, "little was spent except on necessaries. Amusements, other than they could provide for themselves, were not part of a child's life as they are to-day. There were a few parties, a visit to the pantomime, another to a Shaksperian performance and a concert or two, skating in cold winters, and, when I grew up, tennis and dancing. My coming-out dress had a bustle. Not, I think, the 'cushion' bustle, but one with wires tied together with tapes to make a half-hoop which waggled as one walked. Sometimes a steel poked through, which was most embarrassing. One of my brothers as a boy staying with a large family of cousins hid all their bustles on a Sunday morning (these were the horse-hair cushion bustles), and none of them would go to church because they 'felt so flat and indecent.'" (To-day young women feel indecent if they are *not* "flat.") "The daughter who played the organ *had* to go and hastily



THE BUSTLE

A "TOURNURE" OR BUSTLE OF WHITE HORSEHAIR AND A LONG "TOURNURE" OF WHITE BRILLANTE OR RED CAMLET. PATTERN PRICE, 1/7

*(From "The Queen")*

make a bustle out of a white petticoat. When we went to evening parties we hired a 'fly,' a vehicle which generally smelt of musty hay. Flymen wore top hats and livery coats; quite smart as to their top part, but fading into ordinary trousers and boots below, which they kept hidden by a rug. Our standard of life was considerably simpler than in similar families now. I cannot remember that there was a bathroom in our Cheltenham house, but there certainly were gas-chandeliers of hideous pattern which hung from plaster cakes on the ceiling, and side brackets, and the gas lighted by a taper which was stuck into a case. We did not have gas fires or cookers, though no doubt there were such things.

"My memories are those of a child of ten and until I married ten years later. During those years I visited a good deal amongst my relations. An aunt married to a clergyman (a man of good family and private means) lived in a country vicarage. Their staff consisted of a footman, housemaid, cook and between-maid, a gardener and groom, and they had brougham, wagonette and pony cart, a pair of good horses and a pony. Their boy went to a public school, their girls were educated by a resident governess. Here everything was done as in the average small country house: we children breakfasted and lunched in the dining-room and had tea and supper in the school-room. There was no bathroom, gas or hot water, except that brought from the kitchen."

The following extract from an undated letter which was probably written in 1892 shows how the sight of a knicker-bockered bicycling woman shocked old-fashioned people, "Two ladies—or, as Grandpapa says, two shameless females—in bloomers bicycled through the village

yesterday, and some of the women were so scandalized that they threw stones at them. I didn't dare to say so but I thought they looked very neat, though I don't think I should quite like to show my own legs to the world like that. Still, it's all a question of what one is accustomed to. Why do old people always disapprove of anything which they didn't do when they were young?"

The writer of this letter, as a middle-aged woman, did much for the welfare of the breeched, "bobbed" and cigarette-smoking war girl and lived to see two young girls in leggings, breeches and smocks walk unconcernedly into a smart London restaurant, order an excellent dinner and sit smoking cigarettes until it arrived!

In 1896 *Punch* had a cartoon depicting young ladies cleaning their bicycles while haughty footmen looked on. By the end of the century the bicycle had effected a vast change in the lives of people of small means. It is, perhaps, to Miss Margot Tennant [1] and to the bicycle that we owe the social emancipation of the young girl. While encouraged by the success of Miss Tennant's unconventionalities she was yet controllable, but once on her bicycle she fled away—revolting—never again to return to her cage.

But let the previous correspondent resume her tale: "Most of the surrounding clerical families were less well off, some very poor. If they could not afford to keep any kind of carriage (bicycles had not then come into general use), their lives were lived chiefly within walking radius of their homes. I remember a conversation about

[1] Afterwards Mrs. Asquith and now Countess of Oxford and Asquith.

housekeeping expenses and my aunt saying that she allowed 17*s.* per head per week in the dining-room, 14*s.* for the man-servant, 10*s.* for the women and 12*s.* in the school-room—this for food and cleaning materials. I fancy the income here was about £1500 a year.

" Two other aunts, a childless widow and a spinster, lived together, the joint income being £1400. To a girl, one of a large and poor family, they seemed very rich. The house was a medium-sized country house—hall, dining and drawing rooms, library and gun-room, large kitchen and back kitchen, laundry, larder, dairy, servants' hall, no bathroom or gas, and about twelve bedrooms. Staff—footman, afterwards replaced by a grenadier-like parlourmaid, Emma (the fashion of calling maids by their surname came in later), cook, between-maid and housemaid; extra help when there were visitors; coachman and gardener; a lovely garden, tennis, croquet and archery grounds; horse and pony, brougham, wagonette and a low pony carriage.

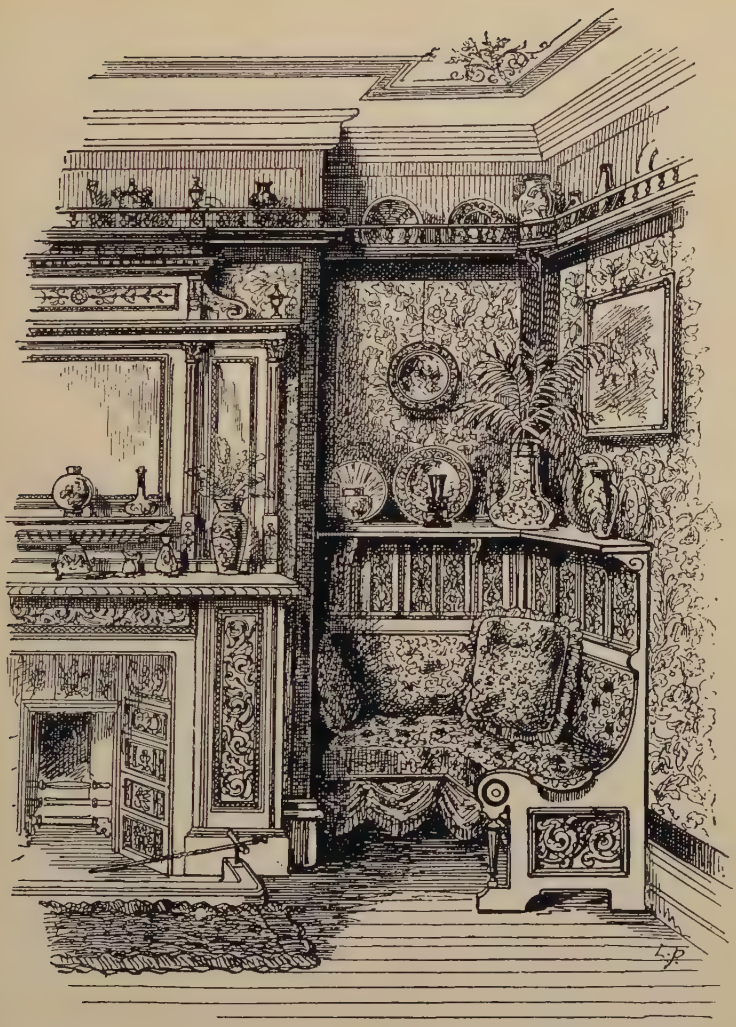
" As children when we visited there we lunched downstairs and were given other meals in the sewing-room, which was also used as a linen-room. There was a storeroom in which groceries, dessert, stationery and all sorts of oddments and garden and stable requisites were kept, also earthenware pans of eggs in lime (water-glass came in later), jams and bottled fruits. It was one of my joys to help to cut up the cones of sugar into lumps and to pound it—this especially when meringues were ordered. The old cook used to call them 'merangles.' Everything was weighed out here and each maid came with her list of requisites. It was a cold room and my aunt wore an apron, goloshes and a silk handkerchief tied over her

cap. She was then a small fragile woman of about fifty-seven, with white hair, brilliant blue eyes, a single eye-glass, and the spirit of a Napoleon. The little dear was devoted to animals but owned with shame that she had a naughty love for a cock-fight. She wore white lace caps, generally adorned by a blue ribbon bow, and in the morning a little black silk, lace-frilled apron: all middle-aged women wore caps then.

" The spinster aunt devoted much time and attention to housekeeping, eating but little herself, but expecting all men who came to the house to eat largely and drink deeply, and being much disappointed if they did not. Men to her were superior beings who could understand Bradshaw and other matters beyond feminine intelligence and who must be well fed.

" How did I know that the kitchen-maid had ' got into trouble ' ? Young girls—I was then seventeen—did not hear such matters mentioned. Yet know it I did, and that Charlotte the spinster, and Marianne the widow, held conclave—that the latter said ' silly fool ' and wrinkled up her nose as was her habit in times of stress, and that after spirited scoldings James Footman made ' an honest woman ' of Eliza Kitchen-maid, a term which puzzles me to-day as much as it puzzled me then. Later, the inconvenient baby having then arrived, the young couple departed elsewhere to be butler and hen-wife to one of our numerous connections.

" Girls who ' got into trouble ' were often treated with great harshness, dismissed without notice and without any care as to what might become of them. I am glad that my little aunt took a wider-minded view of such matters, and while she scolded also helped sinners to repentance



THE COSY CORNER. A PARTICULARLY HIDEOUS STYLE OF INTERIOR DECORATION WAS FASHIONABLE IN THE 'NINETIES

and a recovered social position. Then, to talk of an 'unmarried wife' (an expression which came into vogue during the Great War) would have outraged convention.

"In my girlhood Sunday was observed far more severely than it is to-day. We went to church twice a day and were allowed to go out to tea or to ask friends to tea, but to dance or to play cards on Sunday was unheard of in circles frequented by such people as ourselves. We were not allowed even to sew or knit and our reading had to be of a Sunday order."

"As a young married woman I lived in London in a charming house in a nice situation," writes another lady. "At that date most London houses had bathrooms, but central heating, except in luxurious mansions, would have been considered a surprising luxury, if indeed it had not been condemned as an unhealthy foreign innovation. Gas was used for cooking, but not generally, because the kitchen range was needed to heat the bath water, and in houses where hot baths and late dinners were required, about one ton to one and a half tons of coal per month was allowed for a modern kitchener. Extravagant as these were they were an improvement upon their predecessors. In those days we paid in London 15*s.* to 18*s.* a ton for coal—by taking a large quantity and buying in the summer it could be bought cheaper. We had electric light, but in the house we had before, the rent of which was £100 a year, we had found only gas and had put in electric light. Electric light did not become general in London until the nineties.

"There had been a bathroom with a painted bath boxed in by polished wood, which we replaced with an unboxed porcelain enamel bath. We installed a telephone, which

was then becoming usual, and, what was not usual in any but expensive modernized town houses, a service lift.

" We had two children and kept cook, between-maid, housemaid, parlourmaid and a Norland nurse; these nurses were, I think, the first who trained for the position of children's nurses, wore the uniform of the Training Home and were expected to be superior, well-educated women in addition to trained nurses. The wage of our excellent nurse was, I think, £36. We entertained a good deal, had quite good food and I kept my bills (food and cleaning materials) to 10*s.* or 11*s.* a head throughout, the household, including all but the cost of ' real parties ' as distinct from casual entertaining. So you see that on £1500 a year we lived in great comfort."

Amongst the lower middle class, such as the smaller shopkeepers and people of similar means and position, 10*s.* a head per week was a handsome housekeeping allowance and 7*s.* per week a sufficient sum to provide breakfast, dinner and a six-o'clock tea-supper for a man or big growing boy. When the wife was a good cook and manager an allowance of 6*s.* per head per week for food and cleaning materials provided a sufficiency of not unappetizing food. Successful mechanics and their families lived in much the same way, and a woman who could be sure of 5*s.* per head per week considered herself very well to do.

A rather sad little picture of lower middle-class life in 1901 is furnished by the mother of a family: " We had £300 a year when we first married. Later my husband became junior partner in a business and earned about £400 a year, while I had £50 of my own. We lived in one of the cheaper surburbs, and three boys and

a girl went to good local day schools. Life insurance had to be paid and we had to put a little by in case of illness. Our rent was £35—an inconvenient old basement house—and we kept one servant. The best I ever had married, and then we had a succession of trials, then again a good worker. I used to get them from a local registry or through the local paper. I never would pay more than 1*s.* booking fee, otherwise the registry office took the fee and didn't bother to get me a servant. Up to 1902, when my husband died, we paid £20 a year and the maid helped with the washing. I did the cooking and she did most of the housework. I had to sew and mend eternally. We had breakfast at a quarter to eight for my husband and the children to get off in time. He had a light lunch at an A.B.C. in the City, they came home to dinner. We had tea at 6.30, cake and bread and jam, or sometimes macaroni cheese or anchovy toast or a pudding or cheese, and always a little dish for my husband because he didn't have mid-day dinner. If the children were hungry I'd make them a cup of tea and give them a bit of cake or bread-and-butter at half-past four. The maid had what we had. It was a continual worry to feed them all on 8*s.* a head, which was all I could allow.

"The boys' clothes were a nightmare and my husband had to be very particular to look smart. It was one continual contriving and with the house the same, because as curtains and covers and so on wore out, it was hard to find the money to buy new. We didn't often use the drawing-room because of the cost of fire and gas and making more work, but the children had an empty room with just a table and chairs, but when it was too cold or got dark they had to come and sit quiet with us. The boys

were pretty cheerful about everything, but the girl used to worry if her clothes were shabby and she couldn't do the same as the other girls. She wanted to have afternoon tea in the drawing-room and the maid to wait at dinner, instead of just bringing up the dishes. '*I*'ll never marry a poor man,' she used to say—but she did. My husband was the best man I ever knew, work and work, and work, and never want anything for himself; and then just when things were better, the boys doing well and Gladys earning 25*s.* a week and engaged to be married, he died. Women such as I have to find their happiness in their husband and children or they don't get much—not if they do their best for their families."

It is of interest to learn something regarding the incomes of middle-class people during the century. Thackeray mentions that in 1836 his father was appointed Paris Correspondent of the *Constitutional*, an ultra-liberal paper, and it was upon this appointment and a salary of £400 a year that he married.

For the younger army officers in the less expensive regiments an income of £400 all told was considered sufficient for a young couple to begin upon, while many curates and their families existed upon £150 or £200 a year. Incomes of between £400 and £800 a year were considered comfortable means for country clergy and lesser Civil servants.

During the earlier part of the century here dealt with a young lady's marriage prospects depended upon the size of her *dot*. Were it small she could not expect to mate with a large income, were it large she might make a good match, even though her birth was modest. To-day, a girl's chances of marriage are not quite so mathematical as

they appear to have been in the days of Jane Austen and her contemporaries. In 1850 "young people of good position could marry comfortably on £500 a year and expectations," and letters here published show that an income of anything between £500 a year and £1000 was considered a possible, sufficient or comfortable income according to the requirements of the young couple. In 1875 Mrs. Humphry Ward,[1] then a young married woman with two babies, was living at Oxford. It was possible, she says, "to keep as many little nursery-maids as one required on £800 or £900 a year," which was about the income that she and her husband jointly earned.

From some private correspondence it seems that £1200 a year, with some expectations, was in 1895 considered by a certain N—— a sufficient income. Writing to her mother, Lady ——, she says, "I am sure we might marry on £1200 a year. M—— says that they did so and have always managed to have all that was in the least necessary, even though they have two children. Mamma, please, please, do say yes: we can't go on waiting for ever." Mamma, it seems, considered £2000 a year the lowest sum on which young people (the would-be bride the daughter of a peer's daughter, the would-be bridegroom a squire's son and in the Foreign Office) should marry. The death of poor little N—— solved the question for her at all events.

In 1841 the son of a well-to-do clergyman and the daughter of a country squire married on £700 a year and small expectations, and had they not had five children would doubtless have done pretty well. As it was they were always in straits for money.

[1] *Life of Mrs. Humphry Ward*, by Janet Penrose Trevelyan.

From a collection of household budgets it seems that in 1890 a colonel commanding his regiment, with wife and three children under seven, found it none too easy to manage on an income varying between £1400 and £1500 a year, this being "because we are always moving about, which adds to our expenses. If we could settle down in the country on £1300 a year I could manage most comfortably."

A mother of two daughters living in good society in London considered that in 1913 "young people could begin on £800, with hope of some increase of income: now (1920) I hope neither of my children will marry on less than £1000, and it will be hard enough to do on that, even though nowadays no one hampers themselves with large families. In my young day it would have been indecent to talk of Birth Control."

A girl of the upper class marrying on £800 to £1000 a year and living in London now certainly cannot keep more than one servant and a nurse. Before the War she could have afforded to employ nurse, cook and house-parlourmaid and would have paid about half the wages and the rent now demanded.

In the lower middle class incomes varying from £200 to £500 a year were usual, while before it became possible for women to enter business offices and to go into trade, numbers of spinsters lived in decency on incomes of anything from £50 to £100 a year.

Comparing the incomes of middle-class people with those of any but the most highly paid of the working class it seems absurd to speak of poverty. But the income must be considered in regard to the reasonable needs of the person who lives upon it. To a tramp a

certain income of £1 a week might be riches, to a mechanic poverty. All through the hundred years which divide the end of the Napoleonic wars from the end of the Great World War the wages of the working classes have been rising, until to-day the skilled artisan is better off than many clerical workers of whom a higher standard of living is expected. The idea that clerical work must be worth more than manual work dies hard—a survival of conditions when the number of persons who could read and write was limited. To-day, owing to heavy taxation and the high cost of living, persons of small fixed incomes have a hard struggle to continue to live in anything approaching to the way in which they and their forbears were accustomed before the War.

Modes of life must depend to a great extent upon the income, and for that reason fashions in food, service and domestic arrangements change more in well-to-do households than in those where means are limited, where what I should like to have must give place to what I can have. Thus the life of the lower middle class has not changed as much as has that of richer people. Lower middle-class families had three meals a day in 1820, and for the most part have three meals a day now and cook and serve them in much the same fashion. There is still neither bathroom nor electric light in many small houses, though a bathroom is generally found in even cheap flats and houses built within the past thirty years. Housewives of small means still do their washing at home in order to save money, and domestic arrangements are simplified to save expense and make it possible for a woman with one servant or no servant to do all that must be done.

The life of upper middle-class people, however, has

changed considerably, and before the War had become intellectual or vapidly gay as taste dictated. The costly heavy meals of the first part of the century gradually went out of fashion, there were more fripperies and fewer solids, and as the moneyed classes came more into contact with the aristocracy their habits became more alike, especially in London, though elsewhere, in some of the large industrial towns, for instance, high tea is preferred to late dinner, and inside the house a heavy comfort prevails, and the style of decoration and furniture is still Victorian with a sprinkling of " novelties."

The introduction of simpler dinners served *à la Russe* killed the art of carving, so necessary an accomplishment when all the dishes were placed on the table, and host, hostess and guests were all called upon to help them. The beautiful old polished tables of our grandparents went out of fashion, to again become fashionable a few year prior to the War. It became quite the thing to keep a befrilled parlourmaid instead of a butler, and the buttoned page-boy is now found only in clubs and hotels. The introduction of gas, electric light and a hot and cold water service on each floor lightened domestic work. But although there was less *hard* work there was more fiddle-faddling, more elaboration of service, and the number of servants kept in well-off families was large compared with those employed in American or continental households.

Fashion dictated frequent changes in furnishing and decoration. People enamelled their beautiful old mahogany, cast out their dachshund-legged chairs, davenports and fourpost beds, crowded their rooms with bulrushes and photograph frames and plush monkeys,

GIRLS OF THE PERIOD

A CRINOLINED VICTORIAN AND "THE GIRL OF TO-DAY" AS DEPICTED IN AN ELLIMAN ADVERTISEMENT OF 1914. OBSERVE THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PICTORIAL ADVERTISEMENT AS COMPARED WITH THE ILLUSTRATION OPPOSITE PAGE 140

then returned to sanity and an appreciation of line. The "Greeny-Yallery Grosvenor Gallery" craze had its day, Morris wall-papers and fabrics had theirs. The old furniture-hunting craze set in, varied by a liking for *nouveau art* and futurist designs and colourings. Whereas in the beginning of the century wall-papers lasted for many years, towards the end they were changed for the love of change every three or four.

Women who travelled brought back earthenware cooking utensils. Before that copper and heavy iron pots and pans had begun to give place to enamelled ware and aluminium; the increasing popularity of the gas cooker and the introduction of electric cookers necessitated a thinner, lighter form of cooking utensil; saucepans with straight sides were manufactured, though many of them were still made with the sides sloping in towards the neck—a shape which was convenient when food was cooked on open fires and easily became smoked, but quite unnecessary when closed ranges came into use; while last of all has come toughened glass oven ware.

And slowly and surely, as the mental attitude of the working classes altered, as other methods of earning a living became possible for working women, the supply of domestics lessened and servants' wages rose. At last the housewife began reluctantly to study how labour might be saved. And then came the War, and with it domestic revolution and the dawn of the Labour Saving Age.

# CHAPTER X

## THE SERVANTS OF A CENTURY

Service in 1820—When maid-servants were vulgar—The tea-boy—The mop or fair—A servant-girl's expenses in 1821—Dress—Parlour-maids—"Oh, George, what *beautiful* white legs!"—Footman and cook shared the spoils—Beer money—In service on a farm eighty-five years ago—American servants in 1837—In 1920 they couldn't sleep in the basement or upstairs!—Elizabeth Fry writes of her servants in 1826.

In any book which deals with the changes which have come to pass during the last century something must be said of the domestic servants of the period. Up to about the middle of the nineteenth century the supply of domestic labour was sufficient. Now the supply is in no way equal to the demand and, in consequence, wages have risen, being in some cases double those paid before the War, while conditions have improved greatly.

In the early part of the nineteenth century to go into service was the natural fate of the working girl, partly because industrial and agricultural wages were so low and unemployment so rife that parents were obliged to put their children to work at the earliest possible age, partly because the cost of travelling made it necessary to find work near at hand, and partly because there were but few more pleasant ways in which a girl could earn a living. Women, it is true, worked in shops, in coal-mines, in factories and mills, but the shop-girl, of whom there were but few, needed to be better educated than the ordinary working-class girl then was, while conditions of labour in industrial life were not such as to attract,

for hours were terribly long, work hard and conditions disagreeable. Later, when the life of the working people became easier, they did not send their children out to work so young, while when education became compulsory and fourteen the school-leaving age, children could not enter service until after that age.

The literature of the first half of the century shows that it was considered vulgar to be waited upon at table by women servants, and up to the fifties and sixties persons of any position kept a man-servant or at all events a page.

Thackeray describes an establishment which "was in rather a small way, and in which there were only female servants in the kitchen." [1]

"I liked them, I own. I like to be waited on by a neat-handed Phillis of a parlour-maid, in a nice-fitting gown, and a pink ribbon on to her cap," says Mr. Hobson, and goes on to tell us that "the only way in which we lost our girls in our early days was by marriage."

This was in 1842, and then it was that Mrs. Captain Budge, Mrs. Hobson's mother, thought it necessary that her daughter should keep a man-servant: "It is proper: it is decent. . . . In Captain Budge's lifetime we were never without our groom, and our tea-boy." So Peter Grundsell, the knife-boy, who had received his education in a green baize coat and yellow leather breeches at Saint Blaize's Charity School, becomes foot-boy or page.

"His name was changed from Peter to Philip, as being more genteel: and a hat with a gold cord and a

[1] *Hobson's Choice, or The Tribulations of a Gentleman in Search of a Man-servant*, by W. M. Thackeray.

knob on the top like a gilt Brussels sprout, and a dark green suit with a bushel of buttons on the jacket, were purchased at an establishment in Holborn."

Philip walked behind Mrs. Budge regularly, for she never could go to church without Philip to carry the books, or out to tea of an evening without that boy on the box of the cab. But, alas! Philip waxed fat and kicked. "And here I cannot help remarking," says Mr. Hobson, "that if these folks remembered that they are fed as well as lords, that they have warm beds and plenty of sleep in them; that, if they are ill, they have frequently their master's doctor; that they get good wages, and beer, and sugar and tea in sufficiency; they need not be robbing their employers or taking fees from tradesmen, or grumbling at their lot. My friend and head-clerk Raddles has a hundred and twenty a year and eight children; the Reverend Mr. Bittles, our esteemed curate at Saint Blaize's, has the same stipend and a family of three; and I am sure that both these gentlemen work harder, and fare worse, than any of the servants in my kitchen, or my neighbour's."

It seems that the men-servants of the rich gained a reputation for aping the arrogant manners of their employers, and many are the references in contemporary literature to the haughtiness of the pampered male menial. But they in their turn became humble in the presence of their superiors, and the servants of mere subjects kow-towed to the servants of royalty. Thackeray describes how at the King's Arms in the Royal village of Kensington there is a party of servants, and when Her Majesty's own crimson footmen, with epaulets and black

MEN SERVANTS OF A CENTURY

BUTLER AND FAMILY FRIEND, THE PAGE BOY, HAUGHTY JEAMES DE LA PLUSHE WITH HIS SILK STOCKINGS AND POWDERED HAIR, AND THE POST-WAR PARLOUR-MAN WHO HAS GONE INTO DOMESTIC SERVICE OWING TO THE DIFFICULTY OF FINDING OTHER EMPLOYMENT

plushes, entered not one of the honest private Plushes could stand up before the Royal Flunkeys.

In 1821, and for some time after that, servants, or at all events those of the lesser order in the country, were hired by the year at the annual Mop or Fair, cooks wearing red and housemaids blue ribbons, and each servant carrying the special emblem of her profession—the cook a basting spoon, the housemaid a broom, the milkmaid her pail. In towns certain tradesmen acted as registry office keepers (Mrs. Carlyle mentions that in Chelsea a baker supplies maids), and there is record of a Free Registry of the "London Society for the Encouragement of Faithful Servants," 10 Hatton Gardens. The servants applying for situations did not pay a fee, but none were accepted who had not been two years in one place or who were applying for a first place.

In 1821 female servants were expected to buy their own tea and sugar, but later an allowance of 2 ozs. of tea and ½ lb. of sugar was made, the amount of tea being later increased to ¼ lb. per head per week, and much of this girls often took home to their mothers, who could not afford such a luxury. An estimate of a girl's expenses is given in *The Cook's Oracle*:

| | £ | s. | d. |
|---|---|---|---|
| ½ lb. of tea *per month* | 3 | 10 | 0 |
| ½ lb. of sugar per week | | 17 | 4 |
| 4 prs. shoes | | 18 | 0 |
| 2 prs. black worsted stockings | | 4 | 0 |
| 2 prs. white cotton | | 5 | 0 |
| 2 gowns | 1 | 10 | 0 |
| 6 aprons | | 10 | 6 |
| 6 caps | | 10 | 6 |
| Bonnet, shawl, pattens, ribands, etc. | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| | £10 | 5 | 4 |

As £12 a year was then considered a fair wage for an experienced maid it is difficult to understand how women in service saved much for their old age. But, in many a case, save they certainly did.

The working dress of a woman servant then consisted, as it does to-day, of a print dress and apron, and caps were worn, the latter generally adorned with a ribbon. Their dresses have varied little since 1821, except that skirts might be fuller or less full. Even cooks wore caps until the eighties and nineties, a cleanly habit which has now almost fallen into disuse except amongst *chefs*.

Some old housekeeping records of 1850 show that "liloc" prints with white apron and cap were the uniform wear in a large country house, changing in the afternoon to a plain black dress with white apron and cap. Print was dearer than it now is and all dresses were made by hand.

Numbers of servants in those days did not possess a stuff dress, though for best occasions important people such as housekeepers and head nurses wore black silk dresses. So clad, the head nurse conveyed her charges down to dessert, the small people in velvets and muslins, sleeve ties and sashes.

Apropos of nursery ways a very old woman, for sixty years hereditary nurse in one family, describes how children in the nursery were always taught to leave a little piece for Mr. Manners. This idea probably had some connection with the mediæval habit of using "trencher bread" which must be left for the poor. This seemed very shocking to children brought up in France, who were taught to leave a clean plate, but later on in England the clean plate fashion came in, and then the

lives of children were made a burden to them, because if they were given food they did not like, or did not want, and did not finish it, it was produced at every meal until they did.

Until the end of the nineteenth century it was usual for nurses to add the prefix Miss or Master to the names of their charges. To-day nurse speaks of Michael or Muriel *tout court*.

Until the 1880's maids in good service were expected to dress quite simply, even when off duty, and to wear bonnets in church. In the nineties they began more and more to dress as they pleased, and employers found themselves unable to enforce their wishes as to dress, or for that matter as to church-going.

In the seventies parlourmaids were taking the place of footmen and page-boys in small houses, and in the nineties it began to be the fashion to keep two, or even three parlourmaids instead of butler and footman, though seldom in very large households, or in country households, and from about that date certain people provided their parlourmaids with a special uniform. Generally speaking, however, the plain black dress with white apron, cap, collar and cuffs were worn, as they are to-day, and a most becoming uniform they compose.

By 1890 powdered footmen and coachmen in white wigs were a rarity, for liveries had gradually been growing less and less gorgeous, and the coachman with his coloured waistcoat, plated crested buttons, coloured coat, top-boots and breeches, and cockaded top-hat had been superseded by 1914 by the chauffeur in neat cap, dark livery with dark buttons and serviceable gaiters. Carriage

footmen and carriage grooms "went out," and the chauffeur acted as carriage footman as well as driver.

In the early years of the century footmen wore knee breeches, silk stockings and powdered hair, but later they wore, by day, trousers and long-tailed livery coats of some dark colour and cut to show the striped livery waistcoat, and in some houses changed to knee breeches and silk stockings in the evening.

A letter from a young married woman visiting with her little girl of four in a Yorkshire country house in 1899 describes how the child, being allowed to sit up later for a treat, beheld for the first time the footman in his evening attire, and convulsed the company and embarrassed the poor youth by exclaiming loudly, "Oh, George, what *beautiful* white legs."

Early in the nineteenth century men-servants were required to polish the dining-table and clean the marble mantelpieces, and to travel with the family when required, for then persons of quality, when at inns or hotels, dined in their rooms and were waited on by their own servants. When visiting country houses the footmen carried the bath water for their employers, a task which needed some strength in such houses as Stowe, for example, where perhaps a third of a mile of passage and stairs lay between the kitchen, where water was heated, and the bedrooms, and where a tour of the house necessitated a walk of over half a mile.

In Early Victorian days dinner guests tipped the footman, who was expected to share his spoils with the cook, a mode which later went out, only the guests who came to stay in the house tipping the servants.

Until towards the end of the century servants were

provided with beer or beer-money, and washing was paid, or a money allowance made. It is now usual, except in a few large and old-fashioned establishments, to give an inclusive wage. During the first thirty years of the nineteenth century tea was an expensive drink, and beer—often home-brewed—was drunk in place of it. Later, women-servants drank tea and the men continued to drink beer, and later again tea was provided for all at breakfast and at the five o'clock meal, and beer was drunk at " elevens," at dinner and at supper.

An old woman of ninety-five recalls her entry into service at a local farm at the age of ten for a wage of two pounds a year. " I did weep," she said, " though I were proud of me two print gownds. Missus was a kind 'un and would spare me to run home to mother now and then, so I didna do so ill, though I 'member me now how I did weep alone in the attic o' nights." Then, she explains, on Yorkshire farms the men drank milk at breakfast and were allowed fresh butter and plenty of bread. The girls breakfasted later and drank tea. Beer was drunk at ten o'clock (the men's breakfast was at seven) and at dinner, which consisted of meat and solid puddings of the suet order and fruit pies. Jam was but little used, for sugar was dear. The diet was solid but not much change about it. Many of the labourers " lived in " in those days and were engaged by the year at the annual " mop " or fair, and this went on after girls took service by the quarter or month. It was the custom until quite late in the century to offer beer to any one who came to the back door on any business, both at farms and at the houses of the gentry.

Fanny Kemble, after her marriage to an American

gentleman, Mr. Butler, writing from Philadelphia in 1834 on the subject of intoxicating liquors, says that " beer, or beer-money, was not given in America."[1] It is also interesting to find that what Miss Kemble writes in 1837 of the American attitude towards domestic service might equally well describe the attitude of the English to-day. She tells of a delicate seamstress whom she took into her employ as lady's maid at a salary of £25.

" She had little to do ; I took care that every day she should be out walking for at least an hour ; she had two holidays a week, all my discarded wardrobe, and every kindness and attention of every sort that I could bestow upon her, for she was very gentle and pleasant to me. . . ." In spite of this she gave warning, her reason being that she could not bear *being a servant.* " She told me she was going to resume her former life, or rather, as I should say, her former process of dying, for it was literally that ; she took her wages, and left me."

Later Fanny writes of a woman whom she engaged as cook, " terms agreed upon, everything settled : two days after, she sent me word she had '*changed her mind*'— that's all—isn't it pleasant ? "

What would Miss Kemble think of the man and wife applying for a situation to do the work of a small town house fitted with every labour-saving convenience, with but two bedroom floors and with the assistance of a housemaid, who required three interviews, considered the situation for a week, asked to see all over the house, picked up the bed covers to examine the beds and,

[1] *Records of Later Years*, by Frances Anne Kemble.

without asking permission, opened the cupboards in the pantry, required £120 a year wages, could not possibly sleep in a basement (which they were not required to do), accepted the situation and an hour later telephoned to say that they refused it, as they could not sleep up so many flights of stairs! We might echo her words, "Isn't it pleasant?"

When writing to Miss Kemble a friend asks if there are any Irish servants capable of being trained, but Fanny replies that it is almost impossible to simplify even the first rudiments of the science of civilization sufficiently to render them intelligible to these people, also

"there are insuperable bars to any hope of their progress in the high wages which they can all command at once, whether they ever saw the inside of a decent house before they came to this country or not; the abundance of situations; and the absence of everything like superior competition. The extraordinary comparative prosperity to which these poor ignorant girls are suddenly introduced on their arrival here, the high pay, the profusely plentiful living, the *equality* treatment, which must seem almost *quality* treatment to them, presently make them impertinent and unsteady; and as they can all command a new situation the instant that, for any cause, they leave the one they are in (unfit for the commonest situation in a decent household as they are), it is hardly worth their while, out of a mere abstract love of perfection, to labour at any very great improvement of their powers. A residence of some years in this country generally develops their intelligence into a sort of sharp-sighted calculating shrewdness, which they do not bring with them, but no

way improves their own quick native wit and natural national humour. Of course there are exceptions; but the majority of them, after a short stay in America, contrive to combine their own least desirable race qualities with the independent tone of part familiarity, the careless extravagance, and the passion for dress of American girls of the lower class."

Could not much the same be said to-day of the many untrained young women who do not know their work and do not wish to learn it, but who yet demand high wages?

It is quite a mistake to suppose that the employer of former days was invariably satisfied with her servants or the servant pleased with her employer. Human nature is human nature no matter if the date be 1800 or 1900. Mrs. Rundell,[1] whose book of household management was so much in vogue in 1829 and for some years later, says of domestic servants, "Such as are honest, frugal, and attentive to their duties, should be liberally rewarded, which would encourage merit, and inspire servants with zeal to acquit themselves." Those who were not, presumably, should be dismissed, an easy solution of the problem in days when the supply of domestics was at least as great as the demand. Mrs. Rundell, and rightly so, blames the mistresses who are capricious and refuse to give characters to their servants because they are displeased when a servant leaves their service; "this," she truly says, "is unpardonable, and an absolute robbery, servants having no inheritance, and depending on their fair name for employment."

[1] *Rundell's New System of Domestic Cookery*—1816—formed upon Principles of Economy and adapted to the Use of Private Families.

DOMESTICS OF THE EIGHTEEN HUNDREDS

RE WE SEE THE STOUT COOK WITH CAP AND BASTING SPOON AND THE NEAT MAID WITH
R PRETTY CAP RIBBON, THE HOUSEMAID AT HER SCRUBBING AND THAT SILK CLAD
GRANDEE, THE HOUSEKEEPER

Elizabeth Fry[1] seems to have worried about her domestic affairs, and to have been haunted with the idea that it might be wrong to go on with her public work of reforming prisons and helping prisoners because this took her time and attention from her home life. She mentions in 1826 that she attended the wedding of Sarah T., who " lived with me nine years as upper nurse, and in that time I never remember having the least real difference with her. I am a great friend to doing full justice to servants, remembering the many disadvantages that they labour under."

Before that she writes that

" the thought of forming a new establishment at Plashet, with servants, etc., is to me a very serious one. I find it so difficult fully to do my duty towards them, and even when I do, to give them satisfaction. My mind is often much burdened on this subject; I long to make them my friends, and for us all to live in harmony and love. We greatly (I mean servants and their heads in general) misunderstand each other; I fully believe partly from our different educations, and the way in which each party is apt to view the other; masters and mistresses are greatly deficient, I think, in the general way; and so are most servants towards them: it is for both to keep in view strictly to do unto others as they would be done unto; and also to remember that we are indeed all one with God."

[1] *Memoir of the Life of Elizabeth Fry*, with extracts from her Letters and Journal, edited by Two of her Daughters (1847).

# CHAPTER XI

## THE SERVANTS OF A CENTURY (*continued*)

Jane Welsh Carlyle and her maids—Countess S— said there were no servants to do it—Mr. Dana puts on the coals—"Anger's a good thing for Thomas"—"Her Ladyship did not know her place"—A country house staff in 1830—Dresser or lady's-maid—Etiquette in the hall—Pug's parlour—The Royal visitors' staff—Haughty men-servants—Men-of-all-work—Records of wages—Outings—The modern servant problem—Communal life and domestic labour-saving.

From Jane Welsh Carlyle[1] we learn of the servants of her day. Then, as now, people advertised in the *Times* for servants and possibly, like Mrs. Carlyle, find sometimes that "the only applicant as yet resulting from it is not to be thought of."

A certain Scotch Helen served her well "with only one follower, our butcher's lad, who came silently and sat two hours once a week," and it is this same Helen who in 1845, during Mrs. Carlyle's absence, is left in charge of the house and the housekeeping, which is carried on at some 6*s*. or 7*s*. a week less than if she had been at home. "It is all as it should be, for I defy three people to live as we do on less than 30*s*. a week."

Jane had plenty of complaints to make about her domestics and also recounts a story of a lady who expostulates, "John, John, how is this? Water in the urn not boiling!" John attempts to deny, then finding he

[1] *Letters and Memorials.*

cannot, "Aweel, me'em, I kenna whether it's a'together *boiling*, a'm sure it's hotter than you can drink it," from which it seems that the fancy for making tea with water which does not boil is not confined to the servants of the present day.

"And now I might write a few sheets more," says Mrs. Carlyle, "of the half-dead cook, whom a lady who was going to part with her at any rate, on account of her 'shocking bad temper,' obligingly made over to us as 'a temporary,' at an hour's notice. Such as she is, she has been an improvement on Isabella, for she does her best. But oh! what a muddle it has been! A rushing down of an orderly house to chaos!"

Who is there that does not know that "rushing down . . . to chaos" which occurs when a house is in the hands of bad servants—and the sense of well-being and contentment which good service brings?

Mr. Dana, whose letters have been quoted earlier in this book, makes frequent mention of the servants of the families he visits. When staying with Lord and Lady Spencer he describes how in the afternoon he and Lord Charles set up the lawn tennis. It involved hard work and a good deal of stooping in marking off the lines with whitewash by means of a brush and long strings. "Countess S. said she was sorry to have us work so long and tediously, but they had no servants at hand who could do it."

Again, when calling on Lady Frederick Cavendish at Carlton House Terrace, Mr. Dana relates that "the fire was low and Lady Frederick called for a servant to replenish it; but as it happened, the servant whose duty it was to look after the fires was away, and though

there were several other servants at hand in the house, both footmen and maids, she said she could not ask them to do this simple task; so I did it for her—a very small matter, indeed, but illustrating how amusingly and fantastically the work among the really admirable and civil domestics in Great Britain is divided."

In fairness to servants it should be noted that, although some members of the domestic world carry the "not my place" cult to extremes, etiquette is just as necessary below stairs as above, as was pointed out with dignity by Robinson, butler to Mr. Hamley:[1]

"The old butler sent Thomas out of the room, and came up confidentially to Osborne.

"'I thought master wasn't justly himself, Mr. Osborne, before dinner. And, therefore, I made excuse for him—I did. He spoke to Thomas about the fire, sir, which is a thing I could in nowise put up with, unless by reason of sickness, which I am always ready to make allowance for.'

"'Why shouldn't my father speak to Thomas?' said Osborne. 'He spoke angrily, I dare say; for I'm sure he's not well.'

"'No, Mr. Osborne, it wasn't that. I myself am given to anger; and I'm blessed with as good health as any man in my years. Besides, anger's a good thing for Thomas. He needs a deal of it. But it should have come from the right quarter—and that is me, myself, Mr. Osborne. I know my place, and I know my rights and duties as well as any butler that lives. And it's my duty to scold Thomas, and not master's.'"

[1] *Wives and Daughters*, by Mrs. Gaskell.

That servants were "considered," if not to the same extent during the first half of the century as now, is evident. Disagreeable Mrs. Jamieson,[1] "honourable" though she was, was ruled by her maids and terrified by her butler, Mr. Mulinger, and only gave a party when her servants permitted her to do so.

Records exist of Mrs. Gladstone's treatment of her domestics. In 1840 she arranged a servant's library with great thought and care, and enters in her diary: "Engaged a cook, after a long conversation on *religious matters, chiefly between her and William.*"

Walpurga, Lady Paget,[2] on the occasion of a visit to Cluny writes: "Dolly Cowper, Lord Cowper's eldest sister, was hostess at Cluny and very clever. She married, later on, Mr. Auberon Herbert and sympathized with his 'Utopia.' She made butter with diamond rings on her fingers, and the maids, who were obliged to dine with them, and did not like it, used when they gave notice to say that 'her ladyship did not know her place.' But much as the world may laugh at them, these are the people who make it worth living in."

In some hitherto unpublished letters of a lady born in 1830, the staff of a large country house is described as consisting of "a house steward, groom of the chambers, butler, under-butler, first footman and as many as five other footmen—young men who were required to be tall and of good appearance. In some houses the footmen were never less than six feet in height and had to be matched—like carriage horses! Each son and daughter had their valet or maid. Part of the duty of the footmen was to wait on the sitting-rooms and boudoirs

[1] *Cranford*, by Mrs. Gaskell. [2] *Embassies of Other Days.*

of the family in addition to their general work in the house. There was always one pantry-man—sometimes two and even three in very big houses where there was much entertaining, and a page-boy.

" Some great dames like Harriett, Duchess of Sutherland, employed two maids, the head maid being called the 'dresser.' She actually assisted at the toilette. The other was the brusher, cleaner and folder and did not sit at the housekeeper's table below stairs. The No. 1 and the husband's valet did." (Somewhat earlier than this a lady's-maid was known as my lady's " woman." Lady Cumnor [1] is described as objecting to the new-fangled term lady's-maid.)

In the kitchen of such houses there might be a *chef* and a pastry-cook, two or three kitchen-maids and a couple of scullery-maids and a male scullion, or the kitchen staff might consist of women, plus a male scullion. The housekeeper, a person of much importance, reigned over the female staff, consisting, outside the kitchen, of a head and several under-housemaids (both at Buckingham Palace and Windsor there were, in Queen Victoria's early married days, forty housemaids whose wages were £45 a year, reduced when Prince Albert reorganized his wife's household to £12 to rise to £18; beyond which a housemaid could not go), and still-room maids and laundry-maids. The laundry was generally separate from the house and the laundry staff ate and in some cases slept in the laundry. Where there was a nursery the nursery staff lived and ate apart in their own domains. If there was a schoolroom it was waited on by a special footman or schoolroom maid.

[1] *Wives and Daughters*, by Mrs. Gaskell.

Strict etiquette was observed in these mansions. Visiting servants were given the precedence of their employers, in some cases being addressed by their employers' names. One of two gentlemen who shared the services of a valet relates that "Henry came to me yesterday and said, 'If you please, sir, I should like to know whose servant I am.' 'Well, Henry, you were engaged to look after both of us, weren't you?' 'Yes, sir, no trouble about that, sir. But you see, sir, if I'm his lordship's servant I sit next the housekeeper, and if I'm your servant I sit next the Hon. Miss ——'s maid —which I should prefer, sir.'"

A very old woman, who, in her youth, was maid to a great lady and visited much in the great houses, relates that in these establishments some of the servants did not know the others by sight, much less the family. The under servants regarded the upper servants almost as kings and queens. It was customary in many houses for all the upper staff and visiting servants to eat the meat course in the "Hall" and then to depart in procession according to their proper precedence to the stewards' room, where pudding, cheese and dessert were served. "I remember," she relates, "looking back one day and finding the footmen with their thumbs to their noses making fun of us all. The stewards' room, or housekeeper's room as it was in some houses where there wasn't a steward or groom of the chambers, was always known as Pug's Parlour. I don't know why, but it was."

When the then Prince and Princess of Wales (now King George and Queen Mary) honoured Lord and Lady —— with a visit, the Royal domestic staff con-

sisted of two dressers (as Her Majesty's maids are termed), a valet, footman and loader. In this household the housekeeper, groom of the chambers, butler, valets and ladies'-maids had their meals in the stewards' room, waited on by their own liveried usher. Beer was the usual beverage, and at supper, or—as it practically was—late dinner (for which the women dressed quite elaborately) port and sherry were drunk. The cook, kitchen and scullery-maids ate in a little room off the kitchen, the other servants in the hall, with the exception of the laundry staff, who ate in the laundry, which was a separate building from the house.

In a very large house in Wales the staff was similar, but there were six instead of four housemaids, and when shooting parties took place the household to be fed sometimes numbered 100. Extra help was then needed in the kitchen and back premises. The hostess, speaking of these parties declares, " one's friends are well enough —but little trouble—but their servants are the plague of our lives! On these occasions I wish I lived in a cottage with a ' general.' But that doesn't sound quite proper, does it? " It was one of these servants, a footman, who got drunk and created a great to-do on the occasion of a visit of Queen Victoria by insisting upon including himself in the group of grandees when posed for their photographs.

Small households consisted of butler, and footman or page, cook and kitchen-maid or between-maid, one housemaid and one lady's-maid, or a cook, housemaid and single-handed man-servant or page, while by the seventies cook, parlour-maid and housemaid and between-maid comprised the staff of a well-to-do small establish-

THE "DOMESTIC WORKER"

THE HOUSEMAID WITH HER VACUUM CLEANER AND LONG-HANDLED MOP, THE BE-FRILLED PARLOUR MAID ANDTHE TRAINED UNIFORMED NURSE WHO REPLACES THE "NANA" OF A BYGONE DAY

ment. Middle-class people, even though well off, seldom employed ladies'-maids. People of small means employed a cook-general and house-parlourmaid, or a general servant with or without occasional help.

It was the haughtiness of men-servants, their objection to perform "menial" duties which they considered to be women's work (but which continental men-servants perform without loss of dignity), and also their liking for too much beer which brought about their unpopularity in small houses. It is the scarcity of female domestics since the War, and the number of unemployed men which has led to their re-employment.

In 1822 an experienced man-servant was considered to cost £60 to £70 a year including wages, tax, livery, board, lodging and all other expenses. To-day a man-servant with any training asks from £60 to £120 a year in money wages alone, *plus* the other items mentioned and the employers' share of insurance.

To-day there is a demand for men-of-all-work and parlour-men (generally somewhat unskilled at their adopted trade), at wages varying from £40 to £60 a year, plus board, lodging, tax, insurance and washing. The same causes have led to the employment in small houses of a man and his wife who perform the work between them, with or without extra help, for wages varying from £80 to £120 the two, all found.

Records of the wages paid in country and town houses, and those asked by servants placed by old-established registry offices, or offered and demanded in *Morning Post* or *Times* advertisements, show that though the wages of men-servants have risen, they have not risen so much as those paid to women, and it is the

single-handed servant nowadays who is the most difficult to obtain, and, in consequence, the best paid. While a cook of average capability with a kitchen-maid may not find it too easy to obtain more than £52 a year, a good "general" easily obtains that wage. The following letter shows the wages obtained by a first-class registry in 1860.

"Referring to such old books as I have," writes the owner of an old-established registry, "to the memories of my older clerks, and in one case the actual experience of a former servant now some eighty-five years of age, I can carry matters back to about the year 1860 with certainty, and say that the wages of a Housekeeper or Butler would in that year be about £45 to £50; that Cooks (and good cooks) could be had for £20, but of course Chefs and the heads of large establishments—stewards, grooms of the chamber—would receive considerably higher wages; in fact I have a record of a Chef in the above year receiving £85. Head laundry maid about £25. Still-room maid £16-20. Housemaids, head of three, £18-20. Head of two, £16-18. Kitchen-maids never more than £20, even when upper kitchen-maid. Second kitchen-maid or ordinary single-handed kitchen-maid £15-16. Scullery-maid £10.

"For young servants generally, as a start the wage was £8-10, and in some cases as low as £6 per annum.

"Earlier than 1860 it would be mere guess-work on my part, but there can be no doubt that wages were still lower than the above in earlier days; this I know through the arrangement in my grandmother's fees, where £15 was regarded as a dividing wage as between

an upper and an under servant; the fee £14 being so much and over £14 so much more. My remarks refer chiefly to the large establishments in the country."

Advertisements in the *Times* and the *Morning Post* show that £36 to £55, and even in exceptional cases £60, is now offered to general servants, to cook-generals £34 to £52, to house-parlourmaids and experienced parlourmaids £40 to £60, housemaids £30 to £48, kitchen-maids £30 to £52, scullery-maids as much as £40; these wages being plus washing and the employer's share of the insurance tax. In many cases journeys are paid, both when coming to be interviewed and when entering the situation. Sometimes board-wages are paid while the servant is on holiday, and a money present is given at Christmas, while in houses where guests come to stay the servants also receive tips. Further, the servant must be insured by the employer in case of accident.

The wages quoted would not be obtained by all servants, payment in provincial towns and in small country places ruling somewhat lower. Considering that the servant who lives in is boarded and lodged, that washing is paid, and that, except for the share of the insurance, cost of clothes and a few other small requirements, there are few *necessary* expenses, it is clear that the financial position of the servant does not compare badly with that of other working people of similar education and attainments. This is only right, for the work expected of domestics needs quite as much intelligence as is needed by the average clerk or shop assistant.

The maid-servant of to-day expects and obtains *as a minimum* half a day off each week, half of each alternate Sunday, and a fortnight's holiday each year. Extra outings to be arranged as convenient. She is able to a considerable extent to pick and choose her situations and is generally relieved of much of the expense of finding them. She pays nothing for her training, becoming self-supporting directly she enters service. The conditions under which she lives are, generally speaking, good; she is offered—see advertisements—extra good outings, every consideration, separate bedroom, maids' bathroom, service lift, gas fires, labour-saving appliances, comfortable sitting-room, storage for bicycle; she is assured that the situation is close to bus route and train and to a cinema, and, in spite of everything, she prefers not to enter domestic service.

So serious an inconvenience has the shortage of domestic labour become that efforts have been made by the Government to induce girls to train as domestics. A representative committee was set up by the Ministry of Reconstruction in 1918 to inquire into the reasons for the distaste of girls for service, and methods by which employers might make it more attractive. It was easy to discover why service was unattractive, but so far no bettering of conditions or increase of wages appear to have added to its attractions. The Central Committee on Women's Training and Employment inaugurated a domestic training scheme, but that also appears to have had little effect on the domestic labour market.

Various private schemes have been inaugurated, but so far, and in spite of a vast degree of unemployment, the servant shortage is now only slightly less

serious than it was when most of the women able to work were doing war work. Effort has been made to supply trained and uniformed, daily, eight-hour servants, but this effort has met with little support. Employers say that in most households the maids are most needed from seven in the morning until 2.30, and again in the evening to cook, serve and wash up the evening meal, that houses cannot be run like factories, that there must be some elasticity as regards duties and hours and that Sunday work cannot be avoided. The maid says that she wishes, like the industrial worker, to have her evenings and her week-ends free and to live in her own home.

For the time being the very rich can secure the service they desire, but the merely well-to-do cannot be sure of doing so, neither can they afford to pay and keep so many servants as formerly. Hence the number of large houses which are now being adapted to admit of some form of communal living, the enormous increase of hotel and boarding-house life, of restaurants, tea-shops and clubs, the coming of the labour-saving house and such labour-saving implements and methods of living as make it possible to exist in some refinement with but little paid help.

# CHAPTER XII

## THE LIFE OF THE POOR

After the Napoleonic wars and now—Thirteen miles a day for 9*s.* a week—Life in the army and navy—" The hungry 'forties "—A 14½-hour day at nine years old—The master's strap—Roast, baked and boiled turnip—Bread three-halfpence a mouthful—Married by subscription—Eating snails—Witchcraft—The love spell—The burnt-sacrifice.

The extreme poverty suffered by the greater part of the working classes during the first seventy years of the nineteenth century makes a study of that period sad reading.

High prices and lack of employment followed the Napoleonic wars. In some cases wages were actually reduced at a time when the necessaries of life had risen most. It is recorded [1] that in 1795 the upper classes refused to raise wages to meet the extra cost of living on the ground that it would be difficult to reduce them, but the upper-class officials whose salaries were then increased were left to the permanent enjoyment of that increase, while the agricultural labourers whose fathers had eaten meat, bacon, cheese and vegetables were living on bread and potatoes.

In that same year the Speenhamland [2] magistrates

[1] *The Town Labourer and the Country Labourer*, by J. L. and Barbara Hammond.

[2] Speenhamland was the northern part of Newbury, Berkshire. The Speenhamland Act, passed in 1795, perpetrated and increased the evils of the time by granting poor-rate relief in aid of wages instead of allowing wages to fluctuate according to the prices of bread.

SOME HUMBLE FOLK

THE ITINERANT MAT SELLER, A PORTER AT PRINCE'S AUCTION ROOMS, A FRUIT WOMAN AND A MATCH SELLER: CUT BY EDOUART, THE SHADOW ARTIST, WHEN AT BATH IN 1827

*(From "Ancestors in Silhouette" by Mrs. F. Nevill Jackson)*

recommended an allowance of three gallon loaves for each labourer, and a gallon loaf and a half for his wife and for each additional member of the family, but in 1816 the magistrates in Northamptonshire fixed a single man's allowance at 5*s.* and the allowance for a man and his wife at 6*s.*, the price of the quartern loaf being 11*d.* By this it is seen that a man and his wife were supposed to need barely more than a single man in 1795.

No wonder that during the years of distress after Waterloo there were riots, the rioters asking for a reduction in the price of bread and meat, though surely it was wonderful that a judge could be found to express the opinion that the rioters were receiving "great wages," and that "any change in the price of provisions could only lessen that superfluity, which he feared was too often wasted in drunkenness," and this at a time when men and women who asked for relief were harnessed like beasts to the parish cart, when the district overseer called a weekly meeting at which each labourer was put up to auction by name. These auctioned men were generally let at from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* a week, and their provisions, their families being supported by the parish.

Life was not made easy to the workless man. A shepherd with his wife and five children living at Margate

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The Speenhamland magistrates drew up and published a scale by which every poor and industrious person should receive from the parish enough to make up for the deficiency of his wages to 3*s.* a week for himself, and for every other member of his family 1*s.* 6*d.* a week, when the loaf cost a shilling. As the loaf rose higher the dole was to rise with it. This convenient scale, vulgarly known as the "Speenhamland Act," was adopted by the magistrates in county after county, till, except in some of the northern shires, the labourers of all England were pauperised. "Speenhamland" became a governing fact of English life until the Poor Law of 1834. (*Trevelyan's British History*, 1782–1901.)

applied for relief and was given 9*s.* a week, and the overseer made him walk to Ash, thirteen miles away, every day except Sunday for his 1*s.* 6*d.* This honest and industrious man, out of work through no fault of his own, walked this distance on what food he could obtain out of his share of the 9*s.* for nine weeks, and then his strength could hold out no longer. The overseers employed such methods to try to break the poor from asking for relief.

In 1821–1832 Cobbett[1] made inquiry into the conditions of the agricultural worker.

"At about four miles from Petersfield," he writes, "I asked a man who was hedging on the side of the road how much he got a day. He said, 1*s.* 6*d.*: and he told me that the *allowed* wages was 7*d.* a day for the man *and a gallon loaf for the rest of his family*; that is to say, one pound and two and a quarter ounces of bread for each of them; and nothing more! And this, observe, is one-third short of the bread allowance of gaols, to say nothing of the meat and clothing and lodging of the inhabitants of gaols. If the man have full work; if he get his eighteenpence a day, the whole nine shillings does not purchase a gallon loaf each for a wife and three children, and two gallon loaves for himself. . . . I asked this man how much a day they gave to a young able man who had no family, and who was compelled to come to the parish officers for work. Observe, that there are a great many young men in this situation, because the farmers will not employ single men *at full wages*, these full wages being wanted for the

[1] *Rural Rides*, Vol. II.

IN A BAKERY

IN THE EARLIER YEARS OF QUEEN VICTORIA'S REIGN, BAKERS ATE, WASHED, DRESSED, SLEPT AND KNEADED THE DOUGH IN UNDERGROUND BAKERIES, AND SLAUGHTER HOUSES WERE OFTEN FILTHY CELLERS INTO WHICH THE ANIMALS WERE FLUNG OFTEN BREAKING THEIR LEGS IN THE PROCESS

married man's family, just to keep them alive according to the calculation that we have just seen. About the borders of the north of Hampshire, they give to these single men two gallon loaves a week, or, in money, two shillings and eightpence, and nothing more. Here, in this part of Sussex, they give the single man sevenpence a day, that is to say, enough to buy two pounds and a quarter of bread for six days in the week, and as he does not work on the Sunday, there is no sevenpence allowed for the Sunday, and of course nothing to eat; and this is the allowance, settled by the magistrates, for a young, hearty, labouring man; and that, too, in the part of England where, I believe, they live better than in any other part of it. The poor creature here has sevenpence a day for six days in the week to find him food, clothes, washing, and lodgings! It is just sevenpence, less than one-half of what the meanest foot-soldier in the standing army receives; besides, the latter has clothing, candle, fire, and lodging into the bargain!"

As a matter of fact the fate of that same foot-soldier was not a very happy one then and for some years to come. In 1829 it is said [1] that "it took the whole of a man's time to clean his things! His lock was bright; his white trousers were pipe-clayed; he was three-parts pipe-clay, brass-ball and blacking."

This was doubtless annoying, especially when, as was often the case, the pipe-clay did not dry in time and the trousers had to be put on whilst damp. Before and for many years after the battle of Waterloo the soldier

[1] *Social England*, edited by H. D. Traill, D.C.L., and J. S. Mann, M.A.

was vilely lodged, vilely fed. In 1832[1] there were barracks in Knightsbridge where seven or eight Guardsmen were stuffed into rooms not seven feet high. The men ate, drank, slept, did everything but drill in the one room, and for some time after the battle of Waterloo the men slept huddled together by fours in wooden cribs. The only urinals for barrack-rooms were wooden tubs, and these same tubs, when emptied, were the only vessels furnished to the soldiers to wash in. Barrack rooms were shared by the wives of married soldiers on the strength, the proportion of wives allowed in barracks being six to one hundred men, the washing for the soldiers being done by these women in due rotation.

"It was to these rooms that the soldier brought his newly-wedded partner for the honeymoon, and it was in these that his children were born, all in the presence of half a dozen comrades. If infectious sickness showed itself among the children—and there were swarms of them with every regiment—it was carefully concealed by the unhappy mothers, lest they should be turned out of their only shelter, for they could not afford to hire another."

About 10,000 children accompanied the British Army in its wanderings about the Empire; so said Macaulay in a speech made in 1840.

Soldiers lived on boiled meat and broth and had but two meals a day—breakfast at 7.30 and dinner at 12.30. They had no means of roasting or baking the meat,

[1] *A History of the British Army*, by the Hon. J. W. Fortescue, LL.D., Edin., Vol. XI, 1815–1838.

which was almost invariably beef: needless to say the health of the army was appalling, and the drunkenness terrible, for to drink was their only amusement, their only way of relieving the tedium and discomfort of life.

Another author [1] writes of the way in which soldiers' wives were lodged on transport.

"As we approached the mouth of the Channel, the sea became very rough, and the few women with the detachment were completely laid up with sea-sickness; their sufferings being augmented tenfold by the wretched way they had of lying. No sleeping-berths had been made for them, and they had only hammocks given them like ours; and it is very difficult (in some cases impossible) for women to get into these. The married people had, therefore, to lie upon the deck during the entire voyage; no small hardship, when it is remembered that a vessel in rough weather frequently ships seas, which come tumbling down the hatchways, setting all afloat below, and beds—if the dirty pallets of common cow-hair, such as is used in mortar, issued to us, might be so called—as a matter of course. There was not even a screen to separate their quarters from ours; a gross violation of common decency; and the poor women, lowly as their condition was, felt bitterly the indelicacy of their situation, and often murmured that their feelings should be thus outraged. . . .

"It is in vain," says the same author, "that every soldier is provided with a Bible and a Prayer-book,

[1] *Camp and Barrack-Room, or The British Army as it is*, by a late staff sergeant of the 13th Light Infantry, pub. in 1846.

and that annual returns are supplied by regiments to the principal chaplain of the forces, to enable him to ascertain that they are so provided; if this Spartan indelicacy be forced upon women, the demoralization of them and of the men must follow."

Such was life in the army that it was not surprising that in the latter half of the century respectable working people considered it a great disgrace if a son "went for a soldier."

Conditions were little better in the navy and quite as bad in the merchant service. On merchant ships men suffered terribly from scurvy, a preventable starvation disease caused by lack of fresh food. The sailors' food consisted chiefly of salt beef, salt pork and maggoty biscuit, but in spite of the efforts of various commissions, any betterment of the life of the domestic seaman was slow in coming.

The following is the dietary adopted on board the *Formidable*,[1] a training ship at the time of which Mr. Brassey writes. Boys, homeless or criminal, were taken into these establishments in a half-starved condition, and on this meagre diet were kept at work with scarcely any rest or recreation from 4.45 in summer and 6.30 in winter until 9.30 at night.

### Breakfast

Cocoa, $\frac{1}{4}$ oz., about $\frac{3}{4}$ pint; Treacle, 6 drs.; Bread, 7 oz.

[1] *British Seamen*, by Thomas Brassey, M.P. (afterwards Lord Brassey).

DINNER

*Sunday and Thursday*

Beef, Mutton, or other Meat, baked, 6 oz.; Bread, 4 oz. Flour, 4 oz.; Suet, ¼ oz.; Raisins, 1 oz.—Pudding.

*Monday, Wednesday and Friday*

Beef, Mutton, or other Meat, boiled, 6 oz.; Bread, 4 oz. Potatoes, 10 oz.; Vegetables, 4 oz.; Oatmeal, ½ oz.—Stew.

*Tuesday*

Beef, or other Meat, 4 oz.; Peas, 6 oz.—Soup. Bread, 4 oz.

*Saturday*

Stew of Australian Mutton, Potatoes, Onions, and Pea Flour, seasoned. Bread 4 oz.

SUPPER

Tea, 2 drs., about ¾ pint; Sugar, ½ oz.; Bread, 7 oz.

*Note.*—Slight variations are made occasionally: such as one day's salt meat in the week; or other vegetable for potatoes.

But to return to the life of the agricultural labourer.

A Dorsetshire clergyman, a witness before the Committee on Wages in 1824,[1] said that the labourers lived almost entirely on tea (often made of twigs or crusts) and potatoes; a Bedfordshire labourer said that he and

[1] *The Country Labourer*, by J. L. and Barbara Hammond.

his family lived mainly on bread and cheese and water, and that sometimes for a month together he never tasted meat.

Naturally there was an increase of crime as a result of such distress. A young man was asked how he could live on half a crown a week. He replied that he did not live upon it, "I poach, for it is better to be hanged than to be starved to death," he said.

In January 1829, 96 prisoners were waiting for trial in Bedford Gaol, of whom 76 were able-bodied men, in the prime of life, and chiefly of general good character, who were driven to crime by sheer want. Eighteen were poachers, and amongst them were two brothers in custody under a charge of firing on and wounding a keeper, who endeavoured to apprehend them whilst poaching. They were two remarkably fine young men, and very respectably connected, the elder, twenty-eight years of age, married, with two small children.

"When I inquired how he could lend himself to such a wretched course of life," writes Mr. Potter Macqueen,[1] "the poor fellow replied: 'Sir, I had a pregnant wife, with one infant at her knee, and another at her breast; I was anxious to obtain work, I offered myself in all directions, but without success; if I went to a distance, I was told to go back to my parish, and when I did so, I was allowed. . . . What? Why, for myself, my babes, and my wife, in a condition requiring more than common support, and unable to labour, I was allowed 7*s.* a week for all; for which I was expected to work on the roads from light to dark, and to pay three guineas

[1] *Thoughts and Suggestions on the Present Condition of the Country.*

a year for the hovel which sheltered us.' The other brother, aged twenty-two and unmarried received, 6*d.* a day." These men were hanged at the spring assizes.

During that terrible time which came to be known as "the Hungry Forties" [1] we learn of school-children who did not go home to dinner because they could not have any. Then bread was 6*d.* for 2½ lbs., sometimes dearer, salt 6*d.*, the cheapest tea 4*s.*, sugar 5*d.* to 8*d.* the lb., and wages only 6*s.* to 10*s.* a week. Clothes were dear. Working people could have nothing better than prints for the women, and for the men corduroys and smock-frocks. As for meat, working people were fortunate if they eat it once a month.

A certain George Oldfield who lived near Huddersfield shall tell his own tale in his own words.

"Poor mother died when I was between two and three. My eldest sister went to work in the factory very early. I soon had to follow, I think about nine years of age. What with hunger and hard usage I bitterly got it burned into me—I believe it will stay while life shall last. We had to be up at 5 in the morning to get to factory, ready to begin work at 6, then work while 8, when we stopped ½ an hour for breakfast, then work to 12 noon; for dinner we had 1 hour, then work while 4. We then had ½ an hour for tea, and tea if anything was left, then commenced work again on to 8.30. If any time during the day had been lost, we had to work while 9 o'clock, and so on every night till it was all made up. Then we went to what

[1] *The Hungry Forties: Life under the Bread Tax.*

was called home. Many times I have been asleep when I had taken my last spoonful of porige—not even washed, we were so overworked and underfed. I used to curs the road we walked on. I was so weekley and feeble I used to think it was the road would not let me go along with the others. We had not always the kindest of masters. I remember the master's strap, 5 or 6 feet long, about $\frac{3}{4}$ in. broad, and $\frac{1}{4}$ in. thick. He kept it hung on the ginney at his right hand, so we could not see when he took hould of it. But we could not mistake its lessons; for he got hould of it nearly in the middle, and it would be a rare thing if we did not get 2 cuts at one stroke. I have reason to believe on one occasion he was somewhat moved to compassion, for the end of his strap striped the skin of my neck about 3 in. long. When he saw the blood and cut, he actually stoped the machine, came and tied a handkerchief round my neck to cover it up. I have been fell'd to the floor many times by the ruler on the top of the carding, about 8 or 9 feet long, iron hoop at each end. This was done as a change from the strap. . . . At the Coronation of our late beloved Queen Victoria I was a scoller at the Buxton Road Wesleyan Sunday School. So the Coronation day was fixed. I had neither shoes nor clogs to go in, but, like others, I was not to be bet that way, so I asked another lad, much biger than myself, to lend me his clogs for the day. He did lend them to me. They were verey much to big, quite down at the heels, and up at the frunt. I was not to be stoped by trifles, so I went to the grand affair. . . . I marched in the procession to the old market square at Huddersfield, and afterwards enjoyed a splended tee. Shurely this was

LOWEST LIFE IN LONDON. TOM AND JERRY VISIT A THEIVES' DEN IN THE EAST END

*(From "Life in London" by Pierce Egan)*

one of the brightest days of my life! About this time, or soon afterwards, that Heaven-sent Messenger, Lord Shaftesbury, got a bill passed to shorten the hours in the factory. I read of his Lordship's houlding a meeting in Leeds, where some 200 children or more were at the meeting, and not one of them but was a cripple, as also where both my sister and myself were crippled for life. I do not know I ever had a new suit of cloths—I may have had odd things new. . . . I remember right well my trouses being so bad that I had to perform some operation on them, and as Sunday was the onley day at liberty, I sat in bed that day, and completed the work by cutting the whole backside out, and fixing fresh pieces of cloth in to cover my back with. I wish nothing worse were don on this God-given day."

So bad were the harvests in 1840 and 1841 that numbers of people largely subsisted on bread made from rye and barley-meal, and when that was not forthcoming upon potatoes. Often the wage received was not enough to buy bread for the family, and so a resort to the purchase of coarse stuff was necessitated to obtain more bulk to meet the wants and stay the cravings of hard-working, hungry men and growing children, such as barley-meal, toppings, grey peas, potatoes, and swede turnips. Amongst those whose experiences are related in *The Hungry Forties*, is a poor old labourer. "'I had fine fare yesterday,' he says. 'I had roast, baked, and boiled.' 'Indeed,' said I, 'you were in luck. What did you have? Explain.' 'Well,' said he, 'I and my family had swede turnips, and nothing but swede turnips; but we thought we would have as much variety as we

could, so we had roasted turnips, and baked turnips, and boiled turnips.' "

Another good man, who had been the father of a large family, and had been very hard hit in those " good old times," said that he remembered working all one winter for eight shillings a week. " I had a wife and six children to keep out of it, and flour was twelve shillings a bushel. I could take nothing with me (to work) but a bare crust, and not enough of that, and then left my family at home, some days, almost foodless. Oh, sir, they were awful times." This poor man's wife, in her distress and distraction, said to him, " Oh, Isaac, what shall we do? Bread is three-halfpence a mouthful! " " The best to do," he continues, " could take nothing with them but an onion with their crusts. To be able to get a red herring, and that to be shared by several, was counted a treat."

A blind man recalls that " when he was a child *white bread* was considered a great luxury—so much so that when his father used to take his work to Nottingham he would frequently promise to bring the children a penny white loaf on his return, and such was the eagerness of the little ones to possess this luxury, that they many times went three or four miles to meet their father that they might have it a little sooner, and this in the depth of winter, in frost and snow."

" Many a mother, to appease the hunger and stop the crying of her children, made bran dumplings. A woman told me that her husband had gone many times to threshing without a bit of bread, and was obliged to relieve the gnawings of hunger by eating some of the pig pease and horse beans he was threshing. If these

failed, he was wont to buckle the strap he wore round his loins a hole tighter."

Here is another experience, this time of a boy, the third child of his parents,

"My first vivid recollection of hunger commenced in February. On returning from school with my eldest sister, we found the door of our cottage locked, and although we could not understand what was going on inside the house, we could hear some one in, and we stood crying and knocking at the door, till a neighbour opened the door and bid us to brush off to school again. My sister, who had evidently done the same thing before, took me on to the cabbage bed and puled up some of the cabbage stalks, from which the cabbages had been cut, and peeled of the outer rine, and the centre we eate for our dinner, and many times after we did the same thing. On returning home at night we learned another littel sister had been found under the gooseberry bush, and by this I am enabled to fix the date as February 1849. . . . In conclusion, sir, I can safely say dureing the first 18 years of my life my belley had not been properly filled 18 times since I was weaned from my mother's breast."

In those days salt was so dear that it cost 5*s*. to salt a pig down, and the people who had pigs often had to sell part of the pig to buy salt to salt the remainder. Numbers of poor people lived chiefly on swedes and turnips which they stole from the fields, and so hungry were the children that they would run like pigs after an apple-core in the streets.

A certain John Coggles, mentioned in *The Hungry Forties*, says that he had seen a halfpenny herring divided between four persons. Another correspondent mentions that "they never had any jam and rice was a luxury. Coal was 9*d*. a bushel and oat flights were used for beds: blankets when we were fortunate enough to get them given us by the parish;" and a labourer who wore a blue "slop" and a new handkerchief round his neck soon became the *beau* of the village. An old man says he remembers bread at 1*s*. 6*d*. a loaf in the days when he worked as a plough-boy with his mother's boots tied on to his feet with string. "We used to wear sheep-skin breeches, and when we got them wet through, we lay on them at night to dry them for morning."

In 1845, the potato famine year, housewives would make potato flour by grating the half-rotten potatoes into a tub full of water, when the white flour sank to the bottom.

Another correspondent describes the furnishing of the cottages:

"Many would have a few rush-bottomed chairs, a few stools, and a round deal table, some trenchers and wooden spoons to match, with the sun to tell the time of day, and 'Old Moore'[1] for those who could make out the time of year. Some were, of course, a little farther advanced.

"When a young 'ooman got into trouble in them days, instid o' sendin' 'er to the poor-'ouse, they married 'er by 'scription. Some on us give tuppence and some on us thruppence, just what we could aford, an' paid the

[1] Old Moore's Almanack.

AT THE SEASIDE

HOW THE LITTLE VICTORIAN LOOKED AT THE SEASIDE ACCORDING TO A FASHION PLATE OF 1871

fees, an' got some bread and chesse, and beer for the weddin' feast; an' when 'twas over the new missus she took an' tied up what wor left o' the bread an' cheese an' took it 'ome for to have on the morrer, an' when that wor gone I 'spect they 'ad to dig for turmuts. They lived in a little hut at the back o' the village, but they couldn't pay no rent, an' it had to come out o' the rates.

"Most o' the cottages 'ad their own oven; but we wor night starved sometimes, an' if 'twan't for the hares now an' agen, I dunno where we'd bin. No, we didn't see much tay in them days; we couldn't aford it; 'twas thruppence an ounce; what we did was to toast a bit o' bread at the first until it wor as black as that coal, an' put it in the taypot an' pour water on't, an' that wor all the tay we got. 'Taters was what most folks lived on in them days."

A lady bears witness to the hunger of the agricultural labourer at that time. "I believe butter-milk was given them (the labourers)," she writes, "and my grandmother, who could not bear to see the children die one after another, relieved them from time to time with clothing. It is recorded of a certain Joseph Pugh's wife and daughters that they used to go early into the meadows and eat snails."

In these days witchcraft still played a considerable part in the lives of the poor, especially in the country. There were wise women who prescribed extraordinarily nasty cures for various ills, and witches who sold love potions and spells which would rid their clients of undesired persons, while "saying things" over sick animals

was a common practice. In some counties the door-key and the Bible were used in some form of incantation —certainly as late as the sixties and seventies, as is here described by an author who is a keen student of country life.[1]

" ' Polly, bring the big Bible from the shelf and the door-key, and you, Lizzie, take off one of your garters.'

" An odd kind of numbness seemed to hold Polly's faculties, yet she was eager to obey.

" Ada turned over the leaves till she found a marked text. She laid the key on the page opposite to the passage to which she pointed, and bade the inquirer read it aloud.

" ' En-treat--me--not--to--l-e-a-v-e--thee,' the latter spelt out laboriously, then checked. ' I bain't much of a scholard,' she said plaintively.

" ' Polly can read it for 'ee,' the diviner directed. ' Here, Polly, take the book.'

" Polly was glib enough.

" ' Entreat me not to leave thee or to return from following after thee,' she began, in the approved school gabble of the day, ' for where thou goest I will go and where thou lodgest I will lodge, thy people shall be my people and thy God my God, and where thou diest I will die and there will I be buried. The Lord do so to me and more also if aught but death part thee and me.'

" Ada moved the key to another place.

" ' And now this,' she said.

" ' Set me as a seal upon thy heart, and as a seal upon thine arm; for love is strong as death; jealousy is

[1] *Pagan Corner*, by C. M. A. Peake, about 1870.

THE MID-VICTORIAN BATHING DRESS

SEASIDE AND BATHING COSTUMES IN MID-VICTORIAN TIMES. IN A FASHION JOURNAL OF THE DAY A PATTERN OF A BATHING DRESS NECESSITATING TWELVE YARDS OF SERGE IS GIVEN !

*(From "The Queen")*

cruel as the grave; the coals thereof are coals of fire, which have a most vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it. If a man would give all the substance of his house for love it should be utterly contemned.'

"Ada shut the book, leaving the key between the leaves so that the handle projected; she bound the volume about with the garter, then taking the left hands of Polly and the stranger she balanced the key ring upon their joined forefingers.

"'Now,' she said, 'say as I do tell you and try the letters one after another:

'If A is to be my husband's name,
May the book turn round and the key the same.'

'If A is to be my husband's name,
May the book turn round and the key the same,'

the inquirer repeated, her eyes round with awe.

'If B is to be my husband's name,
May the book turn round and the key the same.'

"The book quivered but did not turn.

'If C is to be——'

"Slowly the book began to move as the key swung round upon their fingers, and at the movement the young woman cried out—jerking her hand so that book and key fell heavily to the ground.

"'Lor', 'tis wonderful,' she gasped. Then she pondered a while, staring.

"'But can 'ee tell me *when* I'm to be married?' she asked piteously at last. 'That's what I wants to

know, for if 'tain't soon I be so afraid he—— Oh, I hope 'twill be very soon!' "

A variant of the mediæval wax figure stuck with pins and melted was in the early 1800's a sheep's heart stuck with black pins and burned, while in the early eighties on the occasion of cow sickness the cows in some cases were assembled and a calf slaughtered and burned in their midst—a modern rendering of the ancient burnt offering. Still later—only thirteen years ago indeed—a man in a certain village who received abusive anonymous letters was advised by his cronies to consult a wise woman at the other side of the county. He did so, and the woman bid him pause for a drink at a village on his way home and again in his own village, and then before ten days were past the writer of the letters would come to him " with summat writ in scarlet on the forehead as only 'e could free 'en from." And sure enough, before the allotted time was over a terrified woman came panting and sobbing to his door. " Take 'en off—take 'en off," she cried, and flinging off her hat disclosed a scarlet rash upon her forehead!

Slowly the spread of education is killing these superstitions amongst the young people and it is no longer easy to persuade the old people to tell of the haunting and witchings in which some of them even yet believe.

# CHAPTER XIII

## THE LIFE OF THE POOR (*continued*)

The sweated tailor—"No horse-flesh, no sick cow"—"Tommy" and "Truck"—Manchester in 1839 to 1841—Living chimney brushes—The school feast—The salt of the earth—The decent poor—"Remember—yes, there's plenty I re-member" says an old woman of ninety—A north-country home—"Oh, Mammy, haven't 'e a bit for me?"—An old man's memories of seventy years.

But if conditions were bad in the country they were none the less bad in the towns. In *Alton Locke* we find a terrible description of the life of the sweated tailor. Then, so Charles Kingsley tells us:

"The trade was divided into what was called honourable and dishonourable trade; in the honourable shops the work was done on the premises, at good wages, in the dishonourable shops it was sweated work. In many cases the men lived and worked on their master's premises, many of them together in one room. The masters kept more men than they wanted, so that each man got comparatively little work, because the masters made a profit out of the meals supplied. The men had to pay 4*d.* to 5*d.* for their breakfast, mostly consisting of one pint of tea or coffee, and three to four slices of bread-and-butter.

"A sweater usually keeps about six men. These occupy two small garrets; one room is called the kitchen,

and the other the workshop; and here the whole of the six men, and the sweater, his wife, and family, live and sleep. One sweater I worked with had four children and six men, and they, together with his wife, sister-in-law, and himself, all lived in two rooms, the largest of which was about eight feet by ten. We worked in the smallest room and slept there as well—all six of us. There were two turn-up beds in it, and we slept three in a bed. There was no chimney, and, indeed, no ventilation whatever.

"Besides the profit of the board and lodging, the sweater takes *6d.* out of the price paid for every garment under *10s.*; some take *1s.*, and I do know of one who takes as much as *2s.* This man works for a large show-shop at the West End. The usual profit of the sweater, over and above the board and lodging, is *2s.* out of every pound. Those who work for sweaters soon lose their clothes, and are unable to seek for other work, because they have not a coat to their back to go and seek it in."

In *Sybil*[1] a horrible description is given of the housekeeping of a Master File-maker named Hatton.

"One of Hatton's apprentices, a lank and haggard youth, ricketty and smoke-dried, and black with his craft . . . was working on a file. Behind him stood a stunted and meagre girl, with a back like a grasshopper; a deformity occasioned by the displacement of the blade-bone, and prevalent among the girls of Woodgate from the cramping posture of their usual toil. . . . The lad

[1] *Sybil*, by Benjamin Disraeli, 1845.

WHAT LADIES LOOKED LIKE IN 1889

AT THAT DATE THE BUSTLE HAD ACHIEVED ENORMOUS PROPORTIONS

says, ' He's wery lib'ral too in the wittals. Never had horse-flesh the whole time I was with him. . . . Never had no sick cow except when meat was very dear. He always put his face against still-born calves; . . . there never was any sheep that had bust in the head sold in our court. And then sometimes he would give us a treat of fish, when it had been four or five days in town and not sold. No, give the devil his due, say I!' . . ."

The housekeeping of the poor was made harder by the fact that often wages were paid in kind at " Tommy " or " Truck " shops kept by the employers—a scandal which led to the passing of a Truck Act in 1726 and of other Truck Acts later. But in spite of all the acts passed, masters continually paid their men in kind and they received their goods at 20, 30 or 40 per cent. higher price than in the markets and open shops. The system was still flourishing in 1842.

Disraeli describes a scene outside one of these Truck shops.

" ' The cheese here at sixpence is pretty tidy,' said a crone to her companion, ' but you may get as good in the town for fourpence.'

" ' What I complain of is the weights,' replied her companion.

" ' I never knew Tommy[1] so bad as this. I have two children at home ill from their flour . . . one is used to a little white clay, but when they lay it on thick, it's very grave.'

[1] Tommy was the name given to articles purchased at the Tommy or Truck shops.

"At eight the shop opens. Joseph Diggs swears and blasphemes at his customers, occasionally leaning over to cuff a woman or lugg some girl by the hair.

"'I was here as the clock struck four . . . I must be home early; my husband is hurt in the knee.'

"'If you were first, you shall be helped last.'

"'Oh! Lord have mercy on me!' said the disappointed woman, 'and I got up in the middle of the night for this!'"

In the novels of Mrs. Gaskell further light is thrown on the sufferings of the poor. Sad indeed is her picture of the housekeeping of the Manchester industrial worker in those three dreadful years 1839, 1840 and 1841. Whole families at this time endured gradual starvation, and for the accommodation of the indigent halfpenny-worths of tea, sugar, butter and even flour were sold.

"Parents sat in their clothes by the fireside during the whole night for several weeks together in order that their only bed and bedding might be reserved for the use of their large family. Others slept upon the cold hearthstone for weeks in succession, without adequate means of providing themselves with food or fuel. In many cases money insufficient for food was used to buy opium [1] to still the cravings of hunger and bring forth forgetfulness." [2]

Those were the days when pauper children were carted from the country to become slaves in factories, when babes of four and five acted as "fanners" in the coal-mines, working in lonely darkness for sixteen and

[1] The habit of opium-drinking still survives in villages.

[2] *Mary Barton*, by Mrs. Gaskell, 1839–1841.

eighteen hours at a stretch. It was the custom to employ children to let down and draw up the workpeople in some of the mines, and the chief constable of Oldham mentions a case in which three or four men were killed because the attention of a child of nine years who was in charge of the engine was distracted by a mouse (1842), whilst the care of the trap-doors in the mines was entrusted to children of five to eight years of age who worked for twelve hours consecutively in solitude, silence and darkness. Children so young were then brought to work in the mines on their fathers' backs and were put to bed the moment they returned. Living children were used to sweep the chimneys, their elbows and knees worn raw with climbing, terrified, beaten until they faced their task, knowing as they did that death by suffocation or by burning might await them. An old lady describes to-day how vividly she remembers the arrival of the sweep to clean her schoolroom chimney with his dirty little boy, who cried terribly. "We always fed him and felt sorry that he should cry, but the chimneys had to be swept and no one did anything about it."

How little many well-to-do people knew—then as now—of the sufferings of the poor is shown by a letter written in 1847 by the Hon. Emily Eden, a clever woman who appears also to have been a kind-hearted woman. "I can't abide these Chartists.[1] I hate to

[1] Chartists were supporters of a People's Charter drawn up in 1838, its objects being to obtain legislative reforms. The six points they demanded were: (1) universal suffrage; (2) the ballot; (3) annual Parliaments; (4) the abolition of the property qualification for members of Parliament; (5) payment of members; (6) equal electoral districts. (*Social England*, by H. D. Traill, D.C.L., and J. S. Mann, M.A.)

be convinced that they are real live people," she complains. But, alas, they were real live people and suffered accordingly.

It is a blessed relief to read of scenes of happiness, of content. In 1828–1829, Prince Pückler-Muskau describes an open-air supper which a Lord D. gave to his labourers: "The children were regaled with tea and cakes. . . . After them came the labourers, and seated themselves at a long table plentifully furnished with enormous dishes of roast beef, vegetables and pudding. Each brought his own knife and fork and earthen pot. The servants of the house set on the dinner, did the honours, and poured out the beer from great watering-pots."

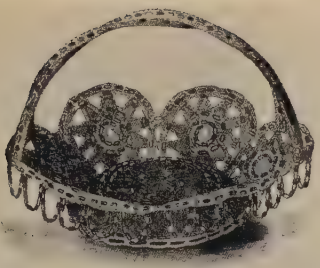
The following is a bill for the materials for a school-feast cake given in the Hungry Forties:

| | £ | s. | d. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Two pecks fine flour, at 6*s.* | | 12 | 0 |
| 6 lbs. currants, at 1*s.* | | 6 | 0 |
| 6 lbs. sugar, at 8*d.* | | 4 | 0 |
| 1 lb. caraway seeds, at 1*s.* | | 1 | 0 |
| Salt and barm | | | 6 |
| | £1 | 3 | 6 |

The poor little people who ate this cake did not need, like the better-nourished children of a later date, to go without their dinner in order to do justice to their tea.

We have here a charming picture of life in a village in the sixties written by one who knows the life of the village as only those of a different rank do know it

To us the demand of the Chartists seems mild, but the Chartist Riots frightened the upper classes terribly and the rioters were harshly treated in consequence.



FANCY WORK

CROCHET AND BEAD WORK WERE POPULAR TIME KILLERS IN MID-VICTORIAN DAYS. HERE WE SEE A BASKET, A TAPER STAND, MATS AND COVERS FOR BLIND TASSELS

*(From "The Queen")*

when they have nursed the cottage people in their own homes: [1]

"Eli's grandfather did not wear side whiskers, but shaved the regions about his lips, leaving a sandy-grey fringe round his chin. Being somewhat old-fashioned in his tastes, he clung to the garb of his youth—corduroy trousers, and the picturesque smock-frock made of greyish linen worked in white or blue thread, completing his costume with a red neck handkerchief, and a shaggy top-hat for Sundays. Thus dressed he attended morning service except during the lambing season, when his work often kept him in the pens both by day and by night. Whenever the Sunday cooking allowed of her absence, 'Granmer' went with him, dressed for her part in a full-skirted gown, a woollen shawl and a black coal-scuttle bonnet made of puckered silk, lined with an elaborate white quilling in whose intricacies Eli took great pride. Granmer and the boy sat in the women's seats in the south aisle under the panelled gallery in which Churchwarden Stubber and his family were enthroned, and over his head Eli could hear how that dignitary shuffled his feet if the sermon exceeded half an hour. 'Grandfer' sat in the north aisle with the men, and by preference close to a monument of a knight and his lady. Bourne children always called these effigies Adam and Eve for reasons unknown to themselves or to any one else.

"Eli generally fell asleep during the Litany, and Grandmer would take him on her knee and give him a 'peppermint sucker' if he woke up before service was

[1] *Eli of the Downs*, by C. M. A. Peake.

ended. At home her Prayer-book and hymn-book each lived in a holland cover, but she carried them to church wrapped in a clean white handkerchief, placing a posy of flowers on top during the greater part of the year, and sprigs of 'Lad's Love,' fresh or dried, to mark 'the places,' for Grandmer was a good scholar and Grandfer too, though he troubled himself but little with printed matter as a rule.

"And then there were Sunday dinners, always with a bit of 'pig's mate,' for 'flesher's mate' was then a luxury almost untasted by labouring folk. There were also dumplings. Such dumplings! Suet or baked apple or 'dunch' dumplings, as the case might be.

"In the afternoon John would sometimes take Eli and the bob-tailed dog, Towzer, for a stroll. If sheep were penned anywhere near, Eli always begged to visit them, and John would lift the child up till he could see over the hurdles and watch the woolly backs, huddled and heaving, and the black muzzles all pointed Towzer-ward with the sunlight shining redly through the pricked ears.

"'They do stink, Grandfer,' he would say when the sheep were penned on roots, and the pungent odour of mutton and trodden turnips filled his nostrils, and John would never tire of explaining what a healthy smell it was and how he'd heard tell as Lunnon folk as were weak-chested would walk miles to snuff a sheep-fold.

"Then perhaps Grandfer would forgather with some shepherd crony, and Eli, holding tight by John's finger, would listen solemnly to endless technical discussions of Tegs and Lambing Yows, and how raddle marks had best be placed in order to differentiate between 'twoters'

and ' fourters,' and both from ' sixters,' and all three of them from the eight-year old ewes with a full complement of teeth, or, as the shepherds said, ' wi' closed mouths,' and whether the old system of leaving the flock waterless in winter was better or worse than the modern plan of keeping a ' trow ' in the pens.

" Then would come tea and a ' lardy cake,' and then John would go off to service again, but after Eli came, Alice would stay at home in the evening and teach him little hymns or tell Bible tales, and from them would drift off to reminiscences of her own youth and that of a black nanny goat called Posy, of whose doings Eli never tired of hearing.

" At half-past six Grandmer would put her darling to bed, first making him say ' Our Father,' and

> ' Matthew, Mark, Luke and John
> Bless the bed that I lie on.'

" Then for a Sunday treat she would sit by his side and sing him to sleep or read him a piece from the ' Good Book,' which had an even quicker soporific action as a rule.

. . . . . .

" But Eli held to her hand.

" ' Tell me about Posy first,' he pleaded, with his most engaging smile, rubbing his tow-coloured head against the old woman's arm.

" ' Not to-night, deary. Grandfer'll soon be home.'

" ' Then sing " Now the day is over." '

" So Alice sang in her soft husky voice till the clasp of the small fingers relaxed and she stole away, leaving Eli asleep in the twilight of the little attic.

" Ah ! the beloved little room, nest of so many dreams, the sleeping and waking dreams of earliest youth. To Eli, I think, no temple, West or East, could ever be as holy as that white-washed shrine, perfumed with the mingled odours of bacon and apples and onions, and wood smoke from the open hearth, and the fire ' as 'oodn't draw ' in the room below."

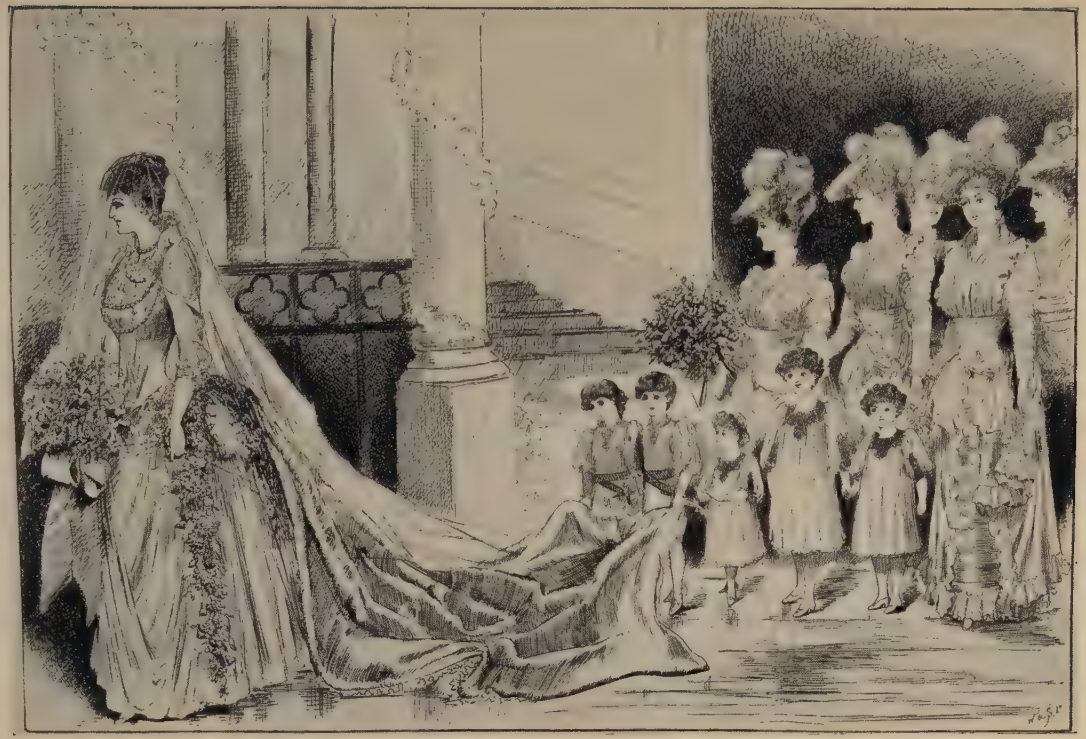
And now let persons still living take up the tale.

An old woman of ninety, crippled by rheumatism but with brain and memory unimpaired, gladly tells of her experiences. Her shrunken little body is clad in decent black, a knitted cross-over is folded across her shoulders and her sparse grey hairs are drawn away beneath a cap of black net frilled and adorned with loops of narrow purple ribbon. She is a sharp-witted, managing old woman, not a little feared in the village for her acid-tipped tongue. A niece who has a pension from an employer to whose children she was nurse for many years, and who still earns a little money by washing, helping at the Hall and by taking in a little dressmaking, tends her tyrannical relative, whose income is represented by the old age pension and her savings, amount unknown to all but herself.

" Aunt 'll be pleased to see you, ma'am, and as for talking, she was always a good one to talk."

Aunt, her wheel-back arm-chair with its patchwork cushion set upon the threshold so that she may bask in the summer sun and watch the comings and goings of the village street, likes her visitors to herself and curtly dismisses Mary Anne.

" Re-member," she replies sharply, her pointed old



A DUCAL WEDDING

THE MARRIAGE OF THE DUKE OF PORTLAND AND MISS DALLAS-YORKE AT ST. PETER'S CHURCH, EATON SQUARE, WHICH IN 1889 AS A FASHIONABLE CHURCH FOR WEDDINGS SHARED THE HONOURS WITH ST. GEORGE'S, HANOVER SQUARE

nose twitching, her still brilliant black eyes snapping with interest, "yes, there's plenty as I re-member. Ninety-two I am. Things is very different from when I was a girl—very dif'rent. Saucy hussies the girls are now and a pack of ninnies the men as puts up wi'em. There's nothing as I can't call to mind since I was a little 'un. Born in 1829 I was, and eldest of ten. People had fam'lies as were fam'lies then and took what the Almighty sent 'em. Seven on us died, and I bein' the eldest can call to mind that I wasn't sorry, though Mother, who was a soft-hearted woman, 'ud cry a bit. My fayther were a carpenter, worked for squire 'e did, and were better off than some. They was hard times for the poor, though many of 'em kep' themselves decent in spite of all. Fayther were a hard man an' took t' strap to us if we didn't be'ave. He'd take t' strap to Mother too. Yes, I mind the village cart and men and women a-harnessed to it, and I mind the children bein' sent off miles and miles to work in the mills. I mind Mother givin' a bit o' bread and an apple to some children and had to break it up, each one a bit, or they'd a half killed each other for it, they would. Meals? Depended upon if you'd anything to eat, but generally breakfast, dinner at twelve, an' tea; no fear all we little 'uns 'ud be ready in time, else we know'd p'r'aps there'd be nothing for 'im as came late. Yes, porridge we 'ad, and bread and potatoes and pot herbs and a bit of bacon on the Lord's Day. We children 'ud have a taste of the grease on our slices. Mother 'ud make dumplings, and when she could a lardy cake. When I was twelve I went into service, £6 a year, and many's the pinch o' tea and bit o' sugar I brought back to Mother. Scullery-

maid and kitchen-maid, and come to be cook at £18 and then at £20 a year, and a good cook I was. When I left off cooking I was sixty-five and earning £40. Dinners was dinners then and the gels knew how to work. The gels went to church and out a bit afternoons when we weren't too busy. Talking of church minds me that when there wasn't a band no more we 'ad an organ, a sort o' hurdy-gurdy. Verger 'e'd wind 'en up and 'ed play away an' all t' people singing. But now and again 'e wouldna stop when it come time, and then verger 'e run at 'en and put 'en out in t' churchyard and there 'ed sit a-playing and a-playing and a-playing like as if 'e were possessed. It did make we children laugh, it did."

The old lady paused to enjoy a chuckle which developed into a cough. Recovered, she continued:

"When I was a gel there was dinner to cook Sunday night like every other night. Good places I had. No, I didn't seem to hold with marryin'—saw too much of it. Saw me own sisters. There wasn't Parish nurses when I was young, nor chloroform.[1] If the women died they died. People took things as they come in those days, and if it hadn't been for some of the children dyin' how'd the poor ever have brought up a fam'ly?

"There wasn't tomatoes and tinned stuff and Lord knows what, and motor buses rummicking about and the ice-cream cart through t' village every day as there is now. My gran-niece lives over at L—— and thinks herself put to it with three children. Feeds 'em on

[1] Chloroform was not used prior to 1847. It speedily came into general use amongst the well-to-do, though poor women did not enjoy its use in their confinements and seldom do so to-day.

salmon and pickles—hee-hee—she in silk stockings and a silk blouse and not content then. I'd like to see 'er husband take the strap to *'er*, I would."

A stout, large-made Yorkshire woman of seventy, a preacher at the local chapel, tells of her girlhood and early married life. Her two sons, one a widower with a grown-up boy, one unmarried and both miners, live at home and a middle-aged cousin "does" for them. The village is about a mile and a half from the mine and still an agricultural village, its middle-aged and old men depending for the most part on the two great houses and the farms of the neighbourhood for employment, while the young men have become miners. The glory of the great houses is dwindling; both, since the war, are partly shut up and in and outside staff reduced. Close to the mine a new village of excellent red brick houses has been built and spoiled by the ugly arrangement of the blocks of houses and the uncared-for waste which surrounds them. Old Mrs. ——'s third son and his wife live in the new village. There are two children and the family income is roughly £5 a week. They pay 10*s*. a week for a house with a kitchen-scullery, ground floor bathroom, parlour and three bedrooms; the tiny bit of garden round the house is tidy, but the windows look out on to a flat waste strewn with cans and other rubbish, streaked in the near distance with patches of allotment gardens and dotted with ramshackle fowl-houses and rabbit-hutches, with, for a background, the tall chimney, cage and pumping machinery of the mine. In the parlour is a suite of plush upholstered furniture, a gramophone and a huge bronze clock and side ornaments. The bedrooms are well furnished and there

are silver-backed brushes on the toilet table. Young ——, unlike most of his fellows, does not gamble and puts by money. The remainder of his income is spent upon good living (they eat meat twice each day), the house and a handsome holiday. His wife and children are well dressed: a happy contented household. Compare the life of young Mrs. —— with that of her mother-in-law when a young married woman. Now the old lady wears a black stuff dress, buttoned from chin to waist, with a long full skirt, and on her head a cap of white machine-made lace adorned with a bow of black ribbon—such a cap as elderly women of higher rank wore in the seventies. Hale, except for a stiff knee, supported by a stick, she is pottering about her garden where hollyhocks, dahlias and asters are blooming. She leads the way into the parlour, the floor of which is below the level of the garden path. The light is a trifle dim, for the window is veiled with a starched Nottingham lace half curtain and a row of geraniums in reddened pots. There is a large round table, a chiffonier, a grandfather clock, mahogany chairs and a bentwood rocking chair. The steel fender shines brightly and the hearth is filled with tow streaked with gilt-paper ribbon. On table, chiffonier and walls there are shells, a great photograph album with a Japanese cover—the gift of a sailor brother since dead—photographs, memorial cards and a little round mirror. Upon the mantel-shelf are two pink and white spotted china dogs, and a pair of shining brass candlesticks. On the chiffonier, on a netted mat, stands a moderator (oil) lamp. Bath there is none, water is drawn from a well in the back garden by means of a windlass and bucket; there are kitchen,

THE MATRONLY MODES OF THE 1880's

scullery and wash-house and two attic bedrooms, and the rent is still *5s.* a week.

"Thank God Almighty, I don't want for nothing. My boys 'll never let me want. Blessed I am in my old age. Yes, it were different when I was a girl. Twenty I was when I married, and I'd been to service since I were ten years old. Little gals went out young then. In farm service I was and never had a bad mistress. One of my sisters was married a bit earlier than me and I wore the same gown, a check silk it was with a scarf with fringe and flowers embroidered on the ends, as my brother Jack brought home from foreign parts, and a bonnet with quiltings of ribbon—me being a saucy bit of a girl tucked some pink rosebuds in amongst it. My husband had something amiss with his arm—I never rightly knew what—at one time 'twas thought it might turn to lockjaw; as it grew worse he couldn't work regular. When was that? Fifty years ago it was—1861—the year the Queen's husband died, poor 'ooman. After my first boy was born things was bad and I went out to work: took a place as vegetable cook at the inn at —— and walked two mile each way, week-days and Sundays, rain, snow or shine, I did. There'd be as many as three hundred at dinner on a Sunday. The mistress was a good woman, and if it hadn't been for the broken food I don't know how we'd have done. I had to leave baby with Mother, and after she died there was an old widow who'd take him at *6d.* a day.

"Women used to go out to work for $2\frac{1}{2}d.$ an hour; up at the House now they pay *7d.* the hour *and* give elevens—bread and cheese and cocoa and cake and such-

like. Up to a fortnight before my second boy came I worked, and then I was 'bliged to give up. I'd had to spend a bit on getting things ready, and I prayed God the baby would come quick so as I could get to work again, for my husband had been out for months owing to his arm, and folk not wanting a man as couldn't work like others; every day I prayed God that the baby 'd be born, but it didn't come for three weeks and then we'd but a few pence left. I was up and about a week after. Miserable I did feel: I sat there and cried, I did, with longing for a cup o' tea. And the poor babe weren't satisfied and cried and cried, till the crying went right through my head. Then my leg was bad and I couldn't get back to work. God put it into the heart of Mrs. —— to come and see me. She was a stout woman, and walking in the heat and carrying a basket she did pant for breath.

" ' I was wondering how you were doing, Mrs. ——,' she said, ' and knowing that lying-in comes heavy I thought as I'd bring you a few odds and ends. Don't you fret now,' she said, ' I know a good worker when I've got one and your place'll be waiting for you.'

" And when she was gone, there in the basket was a half-sovereign. The Lord don't forget, do 'e, my dear? But it was a long time before I could go to work and we went through bad times—me not able to get about and him in work but for a day or two when he could get it.

" I mind the day when we'd come to the last penny and nothing in the house: Lord be thanked, m'usband he got work and went off without a bite or sup. The little lad Tom—he was nigh four then—he cried for his

breakfast. I told him Dada 'd had none and *he* didna' cry.

" ' Oh, Mammy, can't ye find a bit for me ? ' he kept on saying.

" But I'd nothing but a drink of water for him. Presently he began again,

" ' Oh, Mammy, 'aven't 'e a bit for me ? Shake the flour bag, Mammy,' he said.

" And I went and shook the flour bag and made a bit of a cake like a sixpence—but he came over all sick and faint like and 'e couldn't eat it, and I took him on my knee and nursed him, hoping to get him to sleep.

" On the way to work Mr. —— picked up a halfpenny and run back with it.

" ' Go you down to t' farm,' he says, ' p'r'aps Mrs. —— 'll let 'e have some skim milk.'

" You could get skim milk at $\frac{1}{2}d.$ a quart those times. Then 'e went off again, all faint like as 'e was for want of food, to get back to work. Tommy cried when he see'd me go, but my leg was so bad I couldn't carry him an' he weren't fit to walk. ' Take care of baby,' I told him, ' an' Mammy 'll see for something for 'e to eat.' And when I got to the farm Mrs. —— she said, ' Well, there, *I am* sorry, but I fed it all to the pigs.' ' Thank you, ma'am,' I said and turned home. It seemed then as if God hadn't heard me. An' then she come running after me. ' Mrs. ——,' she says, ' there's a batch o' bread that girl o' mine spoiled in the baking, and a pie—if you'd accept of them, why, you're welcome.'

" After, when I married again, I'd comfort and I didn't have but one more child : I was thankful, for I'd suffered cruel."

A Berkshire man, who cannot "rightly remember" his age, but is upwards of seventy (in 1920), speaks of his life. Twenty-seven years ago (1893) his wage as general factotum to a gentleman living in a small house was 13*s.* a week; a year or so after it was raised to 17*s.*; in 1904 his new employer gave him 20*s.* In 1921 he was receiving the wage fixed for that part of the county by the Agricultural Board, 42*s.* a week.

A small wiry man he is, with a kindly face, a shaved lip and fringe of grey beard, and a pair of brilliantly blue eyes. He pauses in his digging and considers—his words come slowly.

"Seven on us there were and we lived up along to ——. A shepherd my father were. There weren't what there be to-day, but I don't know as people did the worse for it—baked our own bread and had a bit o' garden. . . . Milk from the farm—'twas easier to get then than now. Fur breakfast? Porridge or bread an' milk or bread and lard, and p'r'aps a bit o' sugar to it. There weren't jam and marmalade and such when I were a boy. Yes, we had cocoa; I remember in my grandfather's time as they drank herb tea. Dinner-time were noon; father 'd take his wi' 'en—bacon and bread, maybe a bit o' pudden or bread and cheese and an onion. Or we children 'ud take it down to 'im if 'twas near-by; Mother 'd put it on a plate and tie it up in a hankercher—red it was, spotted white. Vegetables and dumpling, suet pudding and treacle—it were black treacle then. Rice pudding—apple dumplings—Dunch dumplings. What be they? Why, a suet dumpling wi' apple chopped up in 'en. I don't recall as there were cake. Bread were what folks

GIRLISH "SIMPLICITY" IN 1894. THE GENERAL EFFECT OF THE GIRL WHEN SO DRESSED WAS ALMOST AS ELDERLY AS THAT OF A WOMAN OF FIFTY IN 1920

ate then most allus, though Mother 'd make a lardy cake if 'twas anything special, like a weddin' or a christenin' or maybe a buryin'. Bacon or a bit o' butcher's meat o' Sundays. Milk 'ud be ½*d.* for skim and 3*d.* new the quart. Beer was the drink mostly; the farmers brewed their own—Swankey we called 'en. Women 'ud drink tea when they could 'ford it. In my father's time 'twas too dear—then they'd drink herb tea—made o' Sweet Avin.[1] That? 'Twas a yellow flower, brown inside; or they'd drink mint tea. I've heard that they'd give away the used tea-leaves up to the House, and that, with a pinch o' fresh tea, weren't zo bad. They'd make a drink o' burnt crusts or o' twigs and leaves.

"Wages were low, 9*s.* and 10*s.* and 12*s.*, but there was garden stuff and a bit extra at harvest, and what Squire give come Christmas, and rabbits now and again. The women went gleanin', and wi' one thing an' another they'd make do. The men they mended the boots, as zome do now." And then, in response to a question, "Cunnin' Palmer? Yes, I mind 'im. When I were a boy a used to live down in one o' they cottages down by the water. They tells a-many tales about 'ee. Stop the butter comin' 'ee could an' make the chimbleys smoke if a chose. Did a bit o' land measurin' too, an' they said as how if a'd left 'is chain one end o' the meadow, a didn't trouble to go an' fetch 'n, just whistle to 'un a would and a'd come crawlin' through the grass to 'un zame as a znake. Conjurin' wi' books 'ee did. That is afore Squire Eyre took away 'is britches, an' after that Squire an' the Parson as were 'ere then they set on Cunnin' Palmer an' took away 'is books. A' could

[1] Presumably the Meadow Avens, but that is brown *outside*.

conjure wi' out 'en o' course, but nothen' like zo ztrong. Well, times is better now no doubt and people don't believe zo easy as a did. 'Twas hard times for some no doubt, but people didn't want what 'en want now. It's the heart and not that as people 'as, as brings happiness."

This man, the kindliest, most honourable and scrupulous soul, has brought up fourteen children, and to-day, clad in a decent suit, preaches in the little corrugated chapel on Sunday, from which, in hot weather, the whining of an elderly harmonium escapes to float away across the water meadows.

# CHAPTER XIV

## THE LIFE OF THE POOR (*continued*)

1850—Improving conditions—On the Embankment—"Turned off because I'm getting elderly"—Waste—An income of less than 4½*d.* a day—How the week's money is spent—The house of the well-to-do artisan—*Round about £1 a Week*—"That spiteful Satterday night"—A four children family in one room—During the War—The modern cottage in an industrial town—Making nail-brushes—Making cheap shoes—What mother-love can do—The cigarette box maker—The old gentleman—The houses which the worker wants—A happy home.

From 1850 and onwards the domestic life of the working classes tended to become rather less hard. Wages were on the up-grade and education incited a desire for a higher standard of living, while fast transport and cold storage enabled the well-to-do worker to buy frozen and tinned foods and so to enjoy a more varied diet than had previously been possible; also with the extension of railways many country women could get to the market town and make their choice of the provisions there to be found. Nevertheless, there was still terrible poverty, and a vast number of workers lived in such a fashion that while not actually hungry they were seriously underfed.

It was in 1887 that Trafalgar Square and the Embankment became haunts of the homeless poor of London, and thus the fact of their existence was forced upon the

attention of the well-to-do classes. General Booth[1] pictures the life of these outcasts who roamed about in search of regular work or of odd jobs during the day, sleeping on seats, in vans and doorways, as best they might.

" Just as Big Ben strikes two, the moon, flashing across the Thames and lighting up the stone-work of the Embankment, brings into relief a pitiable spectacle.[2] Here on the stone abutments, which afford a slight protection from the biting wind, are scores of men lying side by side, huddled together for warmth, and, of course, without any other covering than their ordinary clothing, which is scanty enough at the best. Some have laid down a few pieces of waste-paper, by way of taking the chill off the stones, but the majority are too tired even for that, and the nightly toilet of most consists of first removing the hat, swathing the head in whatever old rag may be doing duty as a handkerchief, and then replacing the hat.

" The intelligent-looking elderly man, who was just fixing himself up on a seat, informed us that he frequently made that his night's abode. ' You see,' quoth he, ' there's nowhere else so comfortable. I was here last night, and Monday and Tuesday as well, that's four nights this week. I had no money for lodgings, couldn't earn any, and I've earned nothing to-day or yesterday; I had threepence the day before. Gets my living by carrying parcels, or minding horses, or odd jobs of that

[1] General Booth, founder, with his wife, Catherine Booth, of the Salvation Army. The Salvationists are a religious body working for the most part amongst the very poor and were first known under that name in 1877.

[2] *In Darkest England and the Way Out*, by General Booth.

ASCOT FASHIONS IN JUNE, 1914—THE LAST ASCOT BEFORE THE OUTBREAK OF THE GREAT WAR, AUGUST, 1914

sort. You see I haven't got my health, that's where it is. . . . What's the good of a man what's got bronchitis and just left the infirmary? Who'll engage him, I'd like to know? Besides, it makes me short of breath at times, and I can't do much. I'm a widower; wife died long ago. I have one boy, abroad, a sailor, but he's only lately started and can't help me. Yes! it's very fair out here of nights, seats rather hard, but a bit of waste-paper makes it a lot softer. We have women sleep here often, and children too. They're very well conducted, and there's seldom rows here, you see, because everybody's tired out. We're too sleepy to make a row.' "

General Booth also describes how two poor women made their home in a shop doorway in Liverpool Street. Another young woman used to sleep in a van in Bedfordbury. Some men who were aware of her practice surprised her by dashing a bucket of water on her. The blow to her weak system caused death. A coroner's jury came to the conclusion that the water only hastened her death, which was due, in plain English, to starvation.

How tragic is the plaint of an elderly man crippled by rheumatism, " I've slept here two nights; I'm a confectioner by trade; I come from Dartford. I got turned off because I'm getting elderly. They can get young men cheaper, and I have the rheumatism so bad. I've earned nothing these two days; I thought I could get a job at Woolwich, so I walked there, but could get nothing. I found a bit of bread in the road wrapped up in a bit of newspaper. That did me for yesterday. I had a bit of bread-and-butter to-day. I'm fifty-four years old. When it's wet we stand about all night under the arches."

Yet another elderly man, who "trembles visibly with excitement at mention of work," produces a card carefully wrapped in old newspaper, to the effect that Mr. J. R. is a member of the Trade Protection League. He is a waterside labourer; last job at that was a fortnight since. Has earned nothing for five days. Had a bit of bread this morning, but not a scrap since. Had a cup of tea and two slices of bread yesterday, and the same the day before; the deputy at a lodging-house gave it to him. He is fifty years old, and is still damp from sleeping out in the wet last night.

General Booth describes a scheme for the collection of waste, and he remarks on the immense extent to which food is wasted.

"Few people have any notion except those who have made actual experiments. Some years ago Lady Wolseley [1] established a system of collection from house to house in Mayfair, in order to secure materials for a charitable kitchen, which, in concert with Baroness Burdett-Coutts, she had started at Westminster. The amount of food which she gathered was enormous. Sometimes legs of mutton from which only one or two slices had been cut were thrown into the tub, where they waited for the arrival of the cart on its rounds. It is by no means an excessive estimate to assume that the waste of the kitchens out of the West End would provide a sufficient sustenance for all the Out-of-Works who will be employed in our labour sheds at the industrial centres."

In 1901 Mr. B. Seebohm Rowntree conducted an

[1] Wife of General Sir Garnet Wolseley, later Lord Wolseley.

DINNER DRESSES IN 1914, A DATE WHICH MARKED THE BEGINNING OF THE END OF LONG-SKIRTED "FEMININE" STYLES

investigation into the economic and social conditions of the wage-earning class in York.[1] The following are some typical cases:

Labourer, Foundry. Married. Four rooms. Four children. Steady; work regular. Man has bad eyesight, and poor wage accordingly. Family live in the midst of smoke. Rent (3*s.*) cheap on account of smoke.

Spinster. Blind. Two rooms. Earns a little by knitting. Parish relief; also 2*s.* per week from a former employer. Very clean. Spends a lot of time with relatives. This house shares one water-tap with seven other houses, and one closet with one other. Rent 2*s.* 6*d.*

Messenger. Married. Three rooms. Seven children. Husband delicate. Very dirty house. Wife works when able. This house shares one closet with one other house, and one water-tap with three other houses. Rent 3*s.* 6*d.*

The affairs of 474 families were investigated. "It is," says Mr. Rowntree, "obvious that the income earned is totally inadequate to maintain them, even in a state of merely physical efficiency. Their weekly earnings amount in the aggregate to £274 11*s.* 6*d.* Out of this sum £68 13*s.* 4½*d.* is paid for rent, leaving £205 18*s.* 1½*d.* with which to provide food, clothing, fuel and all other necessaries for 1589 persons. This is equal to 2*s.* 7*d.* per week, or less than 4½*d.* per day."

Many of these poor folk live wherever a house or room is to be had for a low rental, and many of these houses and rooms, hidden away in dark and narrow streets, are indeed

[1] *Conditions in York in* 1901.

miserable dwellings. The food of Class "A" (income under 18*s.*) consisted "largely of a dreary succession of bread, dripping, and tea; bread-and-butter and tea; bacon, bread, and coffee, with only a little butcher's meat, and none of the extras and but little of the variety which serves to make meals interesting and appetising. . . . The clothing is often as inadequate as the food; this is notably the case amongst the uncomplaining poor, who receive few gifts of clothing, their clean and tidy appearance not suggesting that although the exterior garments are tidy, the under garments are totally inadequate to keep out the cold."

"If there's anythink extra to buy, such as a pair of boots for one of the children," a woman in Class "B" (average income 19*s.* 9*d.* per week) told one of my investigators, "me and the children goes without dinner —or mebbe only 'as a cup o' tea and a bit o' bread, but Jim (her husband) ollers takes 'is dinner to work, and I giv it 'im as usual. 'E never knows we go without, and I never tells 'im."

As an illustration of how the week's money is spent the following is given:

| | *s.* | *d.* |
|---|---|---|
| Food (five persons) | 11 | 0 |
| Rent | 3 | 2 |
| Coal and light | 2 | 0 |
| Soap, etc. | | 5 |
| Sick club | | 6 |
| Life insurance | | 4 |
| Clothing club | | 3 |
| Total | 17 | 8 |

In the chapter on "Housing" Mr. Rowntree describes

the houses of well-to-do artisans and says: "The houses generally have a frontage of from 15 to 17 feet, and usually contain five rooms and a scullery. . . . The sitting-room often contains a piano and an overmantel in addition to the usual furniture, not to speak of ornamental mantelpieces of imitation marble and brightly-tiled hearths. It is chiefly used on Sundays, or as a receiving-room for visitors who are not on terms sufficiently intimate to be asked into the kitchen. Occasionally it is used by the husband when he has writing to do in connection with friendly or other societies, or by the children when practising music. The real living-room is the kitchen, rendered cheerful and homely by the large open grate and the good oven, unknown in the south, but familiar in the north of England where coal is cheap, and where the thrifty housewife bakes her own bread. The floor of this room is commonly covered with linoleum, although a large home-made hearthrug may lend an air of solid comfort. A sofa, albeit of horse-hair or American cloth, an arm-chair, polished tins, and china ornaments on the high mantelpiece, add the subtle touch of homeliness. Though small, the scullery, which is provided with a sink, water-tap, and 'copper' for washing, contributes to the comfort of the house. . . . Few working men's houses in York are fitted with a bath. The rent of this type of house is about 6*s.* a week, the rates, which amount to from 1*s.* 3*d.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* weekly, being paid by the tenant."

The conditions of life described by Mr. Rowntree were not peculiar to York. In 1909 Mrs. Pember Reeves [1]

[1] *Round about £1 a Week.*

made an inquiry into the life led by families earning round about £1 a week in Lambeth. These were not the poorest people, such as the river-side casual, the workhouse in-and-out, the bar-room loafer, but respectable persons whose wages range from 18*s*. to 30*s*. per week, and whose work is permanent, as permanency goes in Lambeth.

" These people," she says, " are generally somebody's labourer, mate or handyman. Painters' labourers, plumbers' labourers, builders' handymen, dustmen's mates, printers' labourers, fish-fryers, tailors' pressers, railway-carriage washers, carmen, packers—respectable men for the most part, quiet and decent, with ' keep themselves to themselves ' kind of wives and children who are the most punctual and regular scholars, the most clean-headed children of the poorer schools in Kennington and Lambeth. The streets they live in are monotonously and drearily decent, lying back from the main arteries, and with little traffic other than a stray barrel-organ, a coal-lorry selling by the hundredweight sack, or a taxi going to or from its driver's dinner at home. At certain hours in the day—before morning school, at mid-day, and after four o'clock—these narrow streets become full of screaming, running, shouting children. Early in the morning men come from every door and pass out of sight. At different times during the evening the same men struggle home again. At all other hours the street is quiet and desperately dull.

" A working man's wife in receipt of a regular allowance divides it as follows:—Rent; burial insurance; coal and light; cleaning materials; clothing; food.

. . . There seems to be so little choice in the manner of keeping a family on 20*s.* a week."

The man who brought home a regular proportion of his wages was considered a good husband.[1] He was a good husband even in the eyes of the woman who remarked, " 'E ain't never kep' back me twenty-three bob, but 'e's that spiteful Satterday nights I 'as to keep the children from 'im." " And what do you do?" asked the interested visitor. " Oh, me? That's all right. I'm cookin' 'is supper," she explained, as though to a child.

" The homes are kept in widely different states of order, as is to be expected. There is the rigidly clean and tidy, the fairly clean and tidy, the moderately clean but very untidy. The difference depends on many factors; the number of children, the amount of money to spend, the number of rooms, the personality of the husband and the personality of the wife. Six or eight children give a great deal of work, and leave very little time in which to do it. In a family of that number there is nearly certain, besides the baby, to be an ex-baby, and even perhaps an ex-ex-baby, all at home to be looked after all day long and to create fresh disorder every minute. The amount of money to spend affects cleanliness very closely. It decides the number of rooms; it decides the amount of soap and of other cleaning materials and utensils; and it probably decides the question of water to be carried up from the back-yard, and, when used,

[1] During the War, when certain employers paid to the wives the wages of such of their workers as had joined up, many of these women were extremely surprised to find how much larger were the wages paid than those which the men had admitted to!

down again. A family of four children in one room is a problem. Two may be at school part of the day, but two will be at home all the time, and there will be no moment when the mother can put them to sleep in another room and get rid of them while she washes and cleans. Her chance of peace or method is small with the always recurring work of the dinner to cook and the utensils to wash, with the children ever present in the same room.

"But the personality of the parents is, of course, the chief cause of order or disorder. A man who loves order has a great influence for order, and a man who likes to go to bed in his boots and spit on the floor has an almost overwhelming influence in the other direction. He may be an equally good fellow in all other respects, but his wife, if she has a tidy nature, may quarrel bitterly with him; whereas if she is more easy-going she may remain his good friend, through not feeling constant irritation and insult because of his ways. It is a fact that a woman, the law of whose being is cleanliness and order at all costs, may, to a slovenly man, make a most tiresome wife. Her little home may be shining and spotless—as far as anything can be shining and spotless in Lambeth—at the cost of all her vitality and all her temper. She herself may, as a result of her desperate battle with dirt and discouragement, be a scold and an unreasonable being. She cannot be got away from in two rooms where a light and fire can only be afforded in one, and she may be the greatest trial in an always difficult life. In such homes as £1 a week can buy in London, the women who do not insist upon doing the impossible, and fretting themselves and everybody else because it is impossible, often arrive

at better results—with regard at least to the human beings about them—than the women who put furniture first and the peace of the family second. And this even if the rooms in their charge do look as though their dark places would not bear inspection. The mother who is not disturbed by a little mud on the floor has vitality left to deal with more important matters.

"To manage a husband and six children in three rooms on round about £1 a week needs, first and foremost, wisdom and loving-kindness, and after that as much cleanliness and order as can be squeezed in. The case where the man loves order and the woman is careless may also be prolific of strained relations between the parents. But a steady woman who is not as tidy as her husband might wish has many ways of producing a semblance of order which makes for peace while he is there, and the friction is less likely to be intense. Of course, if both parents are orderly by nature all is well. The home will be clean, and the children will be brought up in tidy ways, much to their advantage. But if there are to be constant and bitter recriminations over the state of the house, better, for the man's sake, the children's sake, and the woman's sake, a dingy room where peace and quiet are than a spotless abode where no love is."

During the War wages rose, women whose male supporters were serving in the army and the navy received an allowance for themselves and children, and practically every one could obtain work. Old people, semi-invalids, married women, children, all became wage-earners and the standard of living rose noticeably. Visits to families

inhabiting some of the modern cottages in industrial towns and mining villages disclosed parlours furnished with solid modern furniture, pianos, gramophones, pictures and costly mantel ornaments; well-fitted kitchens, the cooking for the most part in the south and midland towns being performed on gas stoves; in the north, where bread is still baked at home, on coal stoves; bathrooms, or at all events a bath fitted in the scullery, bedrooms substantially and tastefully furnished, and floors covered with linoleum, rugs or carpet, and a well-stocked larder.

These were the homes of miners and other skilled workers then earning what we term "high" wages. Numerous families, however, owing to the shortage of accommodation, though comfortably off as regards money, were and are obliged to live in dismal, insanitary dwellings, and again many there were, and are, whose income in no way kept pace with the rise in the cost of living. Memory paints in detail the home of two old people who in 1919 earned their living in London by putting bristles into nail-brushes.

The June sun was pouring down and the heat in the *cul-de-sac* two-story back to back houses intense. Their dwelling consisted of one small top room, most of the floor space being taken up by a double bed. Hot as it was a fire burned: glue must be melted, the kettle boiled, a bit of cooking done. The one table was covered with the implements of their trade and a broken-handled jug in which were arranged a few flowers. The old man, hawk-nosed, white-haired and bearded, worked on silently; his wife, a gay old gipsy of a woman, made her visitor welcome.

GARDEN PARTY FASHIONS IN 1919 SHOW THAT SHORTER SKIRTS AND LARGER WAISTS ARE COMING IN

" Sit ye down, deary." She talked gaily and apologized cheerfully for the wall-paper hanging in tatters in one corner. " Damp it is. The landlord 'e's been and done what 'e can, but it's always the same—it's the damp does it, deary."

And the ambition of these two old folk ?

" 'Tw'd be nice if we could have another table—it's a business clearing up come dinner-time." The old woman indicated the litter of brushbacks, bristles and wire.

In the same house on the floor below lived a maker of cheap shoes, partly machine made, partly put together by hand by the home worker, in this case a thin, dreary, middle-aged man in trousers and a dirty grey flannel shirt, hollow-chested, coughing, working hour after hour in a dirty little room, the window of which gave a view of squalid yards and slate roofs and the smoke-smirched London sky.

In the back basement room of the same house, opening on to a filthy little yard in which are huddled a few miserable chickens and ducks, live an old Jew and his wife. The stink in the room is horrible ; clean it might be ; healthy never.

A few streets away, in a row of two-story houses divided from similar houses by a small square tank-like yard, with an underground kitchen depending for light, if the door into the tank is shut, on a grating in the wall just above the level of the pavement, a woman is washing while another turns the mangle. The children are home from school ; a boy sits in the yard cuddling a scrawny-looking cat, an older girl is seeing to the dinner—bread and stew—two others stare shyly at the visitor. The

room is hot beyond bearing and full of steam from the copper. The hostess conducts her guest to the bedrooms —two, clean, bare save for beds and a chair or two. On the wall near the ceiling are brown spots—bugs. What is the woman to do? All these houses are bug-infested. Here in this dungeon-like kitchen, these verminous bedrooms, a woman has borne ten children, and, marvel of mother-love and mother-craft, has reared six. Her eldest boy ("'e were a good boy to me") was killed "out there" in France.

On again to a row of slightly better houses, no basements, four rooms, a tiny garden and lean-to scullery. The front room is the bedroom of the four girls, one still at school, three working in the boot factory near by. The room is all bed and table—two double beds and a handsome mahogany table—a hereditary possession and inconveniently large. At the back is the tiny kitchen. The visitor recoils from the stink of it, but as the woman makes cigarette boxes, glue must be kept liquid no matter how hot the day. In this room she, a semi-invalid husband and the four daughters feed. Upstairs there is her own and her husband's room, well furnished, beautifully clean, and behind it "the old gentleman's room." The old gentleman is out and his room may be viewed.

"A nice old fellow 'e is, as neat and natty as can be. Does what he can, and prices so high and my husban' not able to earn, we're glad of the rent, or I'd make a parlour for the girls. Good girls all four as ever was—nothin' too good for their mother. If we'd a parlour and a gramophone 'tw'd be pleasant for the girls in the evening. But I'd scarcely have the heart to turn the

old gentleman out, rents so high and rooms so hard to get."

The floor of the old gentleman's room is bare save for a small rag rug, his bed is covered with a thin worn check shawl, on a chair is spread a little piece of white Nottingham lace curtain, and upon it lies a broken comb, a piece of soap in a saucer, a clothes-brush which lacks most of its bristles. On a small table covered with newspaper are a plate, a cup, a teapot without a lid and a small tin bowl, and in the tiny fireplace stand a kettle and a frying-pan; there is one other chair and that is all. But perhaps "the old gentleman" is content: it may be that to him is granted "the peace of mind which passes all understanding."

From such houses as these we turn with relief to some of the new cottages now built and in course of building, and especially to those in garden suburbs and garden cities, well set out, each in its own garden, the roads bordered by green hedges, straight lines broken here and there by a square or crescent. Modern needs demand a kitchen-living-room and scullery, a parlour—or perhaps a kitchen-scullery and a living-room and, for a family, a minimum of three bedrooms. There must be a bath, a good water supply, in urban areas electric or gas light and a gas cooker. With higher wages, shorter hours of labour and the gift of education waiting for all, there follows a demand for a room in which the husband and father may enjoy his leisure, the young entertain their friends, the mother take her rest.

We also enter with delight the village home of a girl once a domestic servant, now the wife of a mechanic who works for the owner of a motor-carrier's van—vehicles

which are fast superseding the horse-drawn carrier's van. The husband's father, a widower, lives with the young couple, and the wages of both, amounting to over £4 10*s.* per week, are supplemented by the sale of eggs and honey, by prizes won at the local flower show and odd jobs of work. The cottage is old, thatched, and surrounded by a garden—to-day a mass of asters. A wicket gate opens on to a narrow flagged path. The house door is open: on one side is the kitchen with its bricked-in copper and huge open fire, now scarcely ever used, a modern oil stove taking its place. On the other side of the passage is the parlour with long latticed window curtained with plum-coloured velveteen. On the window-ledge stand a collection of china figures and a beau-pot of autumn foliage. Across the mantel of the open fireplace, in which wood is burned, is a frill of velveteen to match that of which the curtains are made, on the floor is a grey hair cord carpet. The furniture comprises an old oak dresser on which is arranged a tea-set of pinkish-mauve and silver lustre, a grandfather clock, a round oak table, a comfortable sofa, two arm-chairs, a writing table, a wheel-back chair, and on the wall a book-shelf, and some quaint black-framed coloured fashion plates. On the sofa lies a great grey cat. A white nanny-goat, whose life's ambition it is also to lie on the sofa, puts her head in at the door m-a-a-a-ing plaintively: through the back window are seen chickens, beehives, the clear autumn sky. A home of peace and happiness.

A vast change has come to pass during the past century in the conditions of the working classes, brought about partly by their own exertions, partly by a fast-growing sense of the rich man's duty to his less well-to-do neigh-

A GARDEN PARTY FOR WAR WORKERS AT BUCKINGHAM PALACE IN 1919

DURING THE WAR WOMEN WENT INTO THE ARMY, THE NAVY, THE AIR FORCE; THEY BECAME CHAUFFEURS, OMNIBUS CONDUCTORS, RAILWAY CARRIAGE CLEANERS, GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS NURSES, LAND GIRLS, MECHANICS, BANK CLERKS. ENGLAND BECAME A COUNTRY OF WOMEN, OLD MEN AND BOYS AND LITTLE CHILDREN. WOMEN "CARRIED ON" AND "DID THEIR BIT" ACCORDING TO THE SLANG OF THE DAY

bour. Poverty there still is—bitter, crushing poverty—and probably for one reason or another poverty there will ever be, but surely, if slowly, we are learning that the welfare of all classes is bound together, that no one, be he rich or poor, may sin against his fellow-man and go unscathed.

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